

# Diabetes: Just the Basics

## Healthy Eating for People with Diabetes

Healthy eating is important for everyone. Having diabetes does not mean that you must give up all the foods you like. The best meal plan for you is one that you can stick with. Choosing healthy meals and snacks can help you manage your blood sugar. It is also important to maintain a healthy weight to help control your blood sugar and keep your heart healthy.

A dietitian or diabetes educator can help you plan menus that include foods that you like to eat. Here are some things you can do to eat healthy:

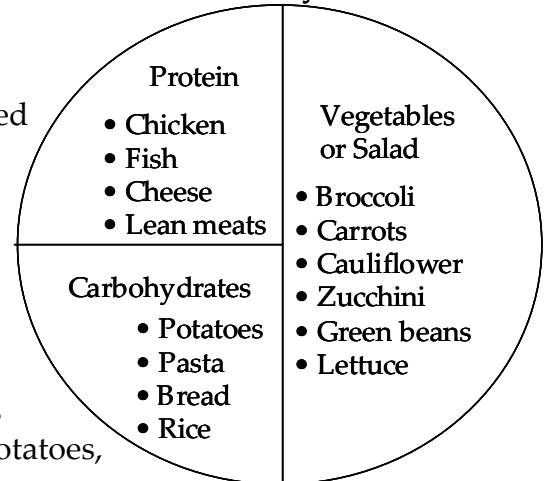
### Eat a variety of foods

- Eating a balanced diet promotes good health
- No one food or food group gives you all the nutrients you need
- Choose a variety of foods each day from the five major food groups
  - Fruits, vegetables, dairy, grains, and protein
  - Eat fruit instead of drinking high sugar fruit juice

### Create a healthy plate at meal times:

- ½ of your plate
  - Vegetables or salads
  - Portion size: up to 2 cups
- No more than ¼ of your plate
  - Carbohydrates such as potatoes, bread, corn, rice, pasta
  - Portion size: varies – see a dietitian for an individual plan
- ¼ of your plate
  - Protein such as poultry, fish, lean meats, cheese
  - Portion size: 3-4 oz, like the size of a deck of cards

**A Healthy Plate**



### Eat at regular times

- Don't skip meals
  - Skipping meals can make you feel more hungry
  - Feeling very hungry can lead to unhealthy food choices
- Don't go longer than 5 hours without eating

### Eat less fat

- Limit red meat (like steak and hamburgers)
- Drink fat-free or low-fat milk
- Eat low-fat or fat-free yogurt and cheese
- Bake, broil, roast, grill or boil foods
- Trim fat from meat before cooking

### Small changes can add up

- Eat 5 servings of vegetables and fruits a day
- Increase your fiber intake
  - Try whole grain breads and pastas and/or brown rice
- Limit your intake of sweets, junk food, and fast food
- Measure your food
- Read food labels

### Steps To Better Health

- Eat a variety of foods from all food groups
- Eat about the same amount of carbohydrates each day
- Eat less if you want to lose weight
- Keep a food log to help you track of what you are eating