

Diabetes care

Carb counting

blueprint

Wellness

Carbohydrates (carbs) are one of three main sources of energy in food, balanced with protein and fat. Carb counting can help you plan your meals and manage your blood glucose (sugar). The balance between insulin in your body and the carbs you eat determines how much your blood glucose levels rise after you eat. By managing the balance of carbohydrates and insulin, your blood glucose level is more likely to stay within your target range. If you take insulin, counting carbs can help determine how much insulin you should take.

Foods containing carbs

Starchy foods, sugars, fruits, milk and yogurt are carb heavy – meaning these foods affect your blood glucose more than veggies, lean proteins and healthy fats. Some examples include:

- Breads, biscuits, tortillas and other baked goods
- Cereals, pancakes and waffles
- Barley, bulgur, couscous, grits, kasha, pasta and rice
- Starchy vegetables like corn, peas, potatoes and winter squash
- Popcorn, potato chips and pretzels
- Beans
- Fruits and fruit juice
- Dairy products
- Sweets, candies, cookies, cakes, brownies, ice cream, jams, jellies and other items with a high sugar content



Measuring carbs

Determining the serving size of carbs that is right for you is based on your weight, activity level, diabetes medicines and goals for your blood glucose levels. A general guideline:

- 45-60 grams of carbohydrate at each meal
- 15-20 grams of carbohydrate at each snack

Eating the right serving size can help you keep your blood glucose in check. If you eat more carbs than you should, your blood glucose level will be higher than usual several hours after eating. Keep serving sizes correct by using measuring cups or spoons, a food scale and by checking the Nutrition Facts label on foods.

Visiting with a dietitian or diabetes educator can help you with a personalized meal plan.



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Common carb serving sizes (per 15 grams)

Food	Serving Size	Food	Serving Size
Apple	1 small (4 oz)	Milk, fat-free	1 cup (8 oz)
Bagel	¼ large (1 oz)	Orange juice	½ cup (4 oz)
Banana	1 extra small (4 oz)	Pasta or cooked rice	1/3 cup (2.5 oz)
Bread	1 slice (1 oz)	Popcorn, popped	3 cups (24 oz)
Corn	½ cup (4 oz)	Potato, mashed	½ cup (4 oz)
Canned fruit	½ cup (4 oz)	Sugar	1 tablespoon
Light ice cream	½ cup (4 oz)	Sweet potato	½ cup (4 oz)
Jam/Jelly	1 tablespoon	Tortilla, corn or flour	1 (6 inches across)

Visit with your primary care provider (PCP) for more information about diabetes management. To find a provider or view your benefits, visit blueprintportal.com.



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Source: American Diabetes Association, diabetes.org