

# food and diabetes

## grocery shopping guidance

### understanding diabetes and blood sugar

According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 45-65% of daily calories should come from carbohydrates.

Carbohydrates are your body's main energy source and they serve as fuel for your brain. All carbohydrates are broken down by the body into a sugar called glucose that is released into the bloodstream (known as blood sugar or blood glucose). Every time you eat, your body converts food into blood sugar. In healthy individuals, blood sugar levels are managed by a hormone called insulin.

Individuals with type 2 diabetes do not make enough insulin or the insulin does not work properly. This causes blood sugar levels to rise, which can result in complications like weakness and blurred vision in the short term and nerve damage and kidney problems in the long term.

### how does this relate to food?

For people with type 2 diabetes, blood sugar can be controlled through medication prescribed by a doctor and diet.

It is a myth that people with diabetes cannot eat foods with carbohydrates. Since carbohydrates are the body's preferred source of energy, they are essential. What is most important for people with type 2 diabetes is the quality of the carbohydrate and the balance of intake throughout the day. Planning meals and monitoring blood sugar are important components of blood sugar management. Working with credentialed healthcare professionals to develop a personalized blood sugar management program is essential.

### eating with diabetes

The American Diabetes Association has identified "10 Diabetes Superfoods." These foods received this distinction because they met at least one of the following criteria: they have the type of carbohydrates that do not rapidly increase blood sugar (called low-glycemic foods), they are high in good fats, and/or they have important nutrients like calcium, potassium, and fiber.



BEANS



DARK GREEN  
LEAFY VEGETABLES



CITRUS



FAT-FREE MILK  
& YOGURT



SWEET  
POTATOES



BERRIES



TOMATOES



WHOLE GRAINS



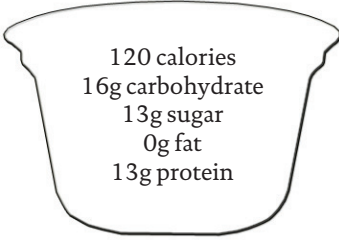
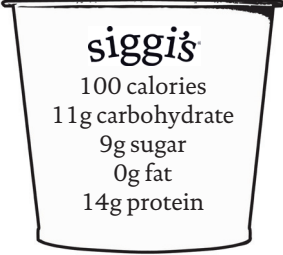
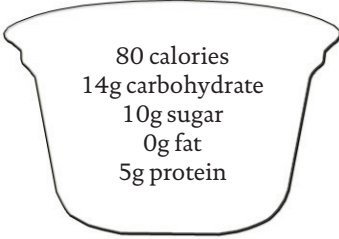
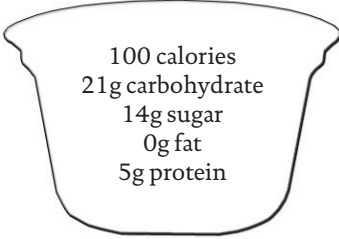
FISH HIGH IN  
OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS



NUTS

## comparing food options

It is important to recognize that not all food choices are equal. For example, while fat-free yogurt is a “Diabetes Superfood,” not all yogurts are alike. Here is the nutrition information and ingredients of four different vanilla yogurts that you may see on the supermarket shelf.

Option A	Option B
 <p>120 calories 16g carbohydrate 13g sugar 0g fat 13g protein</p> <p>5.3oz</p> <p>INGREDIENTS: Nonfat Yogurt (Cultured Pasteurized Nonfat Milk, Live and Active Cultures: S. Thermophilus, L. Bulgaricus, L. acidophilus, Bifidus and L. Casei), Evaporated Cane Juice, Vanilla Extract, Locust Bean Gum, Pectin</p>	 <p>100 calories 11g carbohydrate 9g sugar 0g fat 14g protein</p> <p>5.3oz</p> <p>INGREDIENTS: Pasteurized Skim Milk, Organic Agave Nectar, Madagascar Bourbon Vanilla, Live Active Cultures (B. lactis, L. acidophilus, L. delbrueckii subsp. bulgaricus, L. delbrueckii subsp. lactis, S. thermophilus)</p>
Option C	Option D
 <p>80 calories 14g carbohydrate 10g sugar 0g fat 5g protein</p> <p>6oz</p> <p>INGREDIENTS: Cultured Grade A Non-Fat Milk, Water, Fructose, Modified Food Starch, Contains &lt;1% Modified Corn Starch, Kosher Gelatin, Natural and Artificial Flavors, Sucralose, Sodium Citrate, Potassium Sorbate (to maintain freshness), Caramel Color, Acesulfame Potassium, Citric Acid, Vitamin A Palmitate, Annatto Extract (for color), Vitamin D3</p>	 <p>100 calories 21g carbohydrate 14g sugar 0g fat 5g protein</p> <p>6oz</p> <p>INGREDIENTS: Pasteurized Grade A Nonfat Milk, Sugar, Modified Corn Starch, Kosher Gelatin, Corn Starch, Tricalcium Phosphate, Natural and Artificial Flavor, Potassium Sorbate, Sucralose, Acesulfame Potassium, Vitamin A Acetate, Vitamin D3, Active Cultures including L. acidophilus</p>

## reading nutrition labels

Reading and comparing nutrition labels can help you make the best choices. The main parts of a food label that you should look at when evaluating diabetes-friendly foods include:

**Serving Size:** Always check the serving size, as this tells how much of a food the nutrition label is calculated against. And always keep in mind that packages often contain more than one serving.

**Calories:** If you are trying to lose or maintain your weight, the number of calories you eat is important. But when choosing between similar foods, the lowest calorie option is not always best. You must evaluate calories in the context of other parts of the label, especially carbohydrates, sugars, and ingredients.

**Total Carbohydrate:** Total carbohydrate is composed of sugars, complex carbohydrates, and fiber. Each of these can impact blood sugar, so it is important to pay attention to the total carbs when checking labels - not just the sugars.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 container (150g)	
Calories 100	Calories from fat 0
* % Daily Value	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0g
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 60mg	2%
Total Carbohydrate 11g	4%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 9g	
Protein 14g	28%
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 15%	Iron 0%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet	

**Total Fat:** This tells you how much fat is in a food per serving, and it is best to choose foods with less saturated fat and no trans fat.

**Sodium:** While sodium doesn't impact blood sugar levels, most people eat much more sodium than they need. It is important to remember that a food that doesn't taste "salty" could still be high in sodium.

**Ingredients:** Generally, the longer the ingredients list, the more processed the food is. It is best to choose foods with a simple ingredient list with items that are familiar (i.e., ingredients that you would find in your own kitchen).

**Ingredients**  
Pasteurized Skim Milk, Organic Agave Nectar, Madagascar Bourbon Vanilla, Live Active Cultures