

DAILY DIABETES MEAL PLANNING GUIDE

A daily meal plan is an important part of your diabetes management, along with physical activity, blood sugar (glucose) checks, and, often, diabetes medications.

There is no ideal meal plan that works for everyone with diabetes. This guide provides you with a variety of information that may help you plan your meals:

- **BALANCE YOUR PLATE:** Many people with diabetes like to keep meal planning simple. This eating plan can help you easily portion out your food
- **A HANDY GUIDE TO PORTION SIZES:** Quick tips for estimating portion sizes
- **FOOD LISTS FOR MEAL PLANNING:** Use this tool to help you figure out how many carbohydrates, proteins, and fats are a good amount for you
- **CARBOHYDRATE COUNTING:** There are many foods with carbohydrates you can still enjoy, including grains, fruits, vegetables, milk products, and even some food choices with sugar. Carbohydrates raise your blood sugar level more than proteins and fats. Learn how to track the carbohydrates you eat in your meals and snacks

DIETARY GUIDELINES AT A GLANCE:

- Balance your calories to manage your weight
- Increase your intake of nutrient-dense foods, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy and protein, and healthy fats/oils
- Reduce your intake of sodium, fats, added sugars, refined grains, and alcohol
- Build healthy eating patterns

Checking your blood sugar as directed by your healthcare provider will help you to see how your food choices affect your blood sugar. It can also help you determine where adjustments may be necessary.

A registered dietitian (RD) can help you make a meal plan that best meets your needs and lifestyle. Ask your healthcare provider, certified diabetes educator (CDE), hospital, or local diabetes association for the names of RDs in your area who work with people who have diabetes, or search for an RD online at www.eatright.org.

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MEAL PLANNING OPTIONS

BALANCE YOUR PLATE

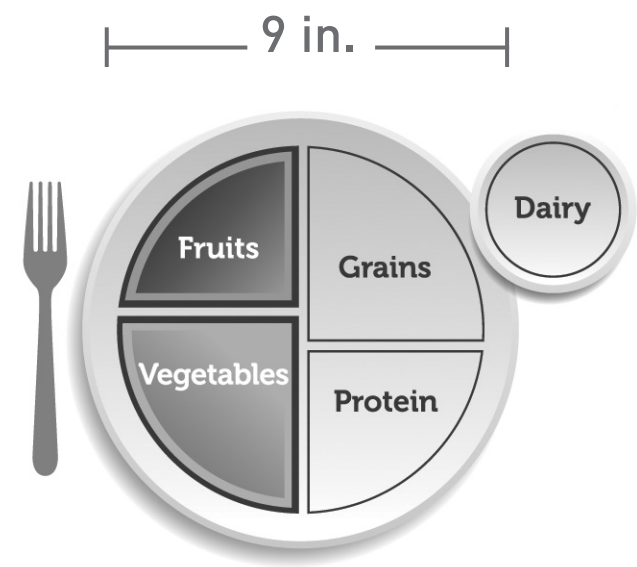
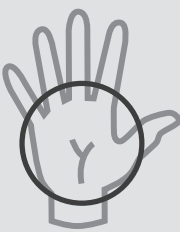


Plate Method

The plate method is not customized to match an individual's carbohydrate needs and blood sugar goals. It's still important to see an RD or CDE for nutrition advice.

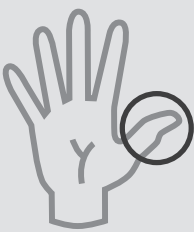
A HANDY GUIDE TO PORTION SIZES*:



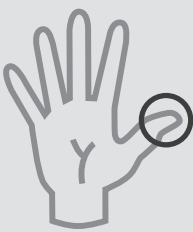
Your palm size, not including fingers and thumb, is about 3 ounces of cooked and boneless meat.



Your fist size is about 1 cup or about 30 grams of carbs for foods such as 1 cup ice cream or 1 cup cooked cereal.



Your thumb size is about 1 tablespoon or 1 serving of regular salad dressing, reduced-fat mayonnaise, or reduced-fat margarine.



The size of your thumb tip is about 1 teaspoon, or 1 serving, of margarine, mayonnaise, or other fats or oils.

- **FRUITS:** A serving of fruit is 1 small fresh fruit, 2 tbsp dried fruit, or ½ cup canned fruit or 4 oz unsweetened fruit juice
- **VEGETABLES:** Choose nonstarchy vegetables, such as broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, or green beans
- **GRAINS:** Fill ¼ of the plate with a bread, cooked grain, or starchy vegetable, such as corn, brown rice, or potatoes. Choose whole grains more often
- **DAIRY:** Add 1 cup fat-free/low-fat milk or ⅔ cup fat-free/low-fat/light yogurt
- **PROTEIN:** Fill this ¼ of the plate with lean meat, poultry, or fish. If you choose a plant-based protein, such as dried beans, remember to include the carbohydrate content as part of your total carbohydrate amount for the meal

FOOD LISTS FOR MEAL PLANNING

KEY	
* Foods marked with * should be counted as 1 starch + 1 fat per serving	
☺ Foods marked with ☺ contain more than 3 grams of dietary fiber per serving	
! Foods marked with ! contain 400 mg or more of sodium per serving	
oz= ounce	
tsp= teaspoon	
tbsp= tablespoon	
Adapted from: The Official Pocket Guide to Diabetic Exchanges, American Diabetes Association, 2015.	
CARBOHYDRATES	
STARCH	
Each serving from this list contains 15 grams carbohydrate, 0-3 grams protein, 0-1 gram fat, and 80 calories.	
Most of the calories in these foods come from carbohydrates, a good source of energy. Many foods from this group also give you fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Prepare and eat starchy foods with as little added fat as possible. Choose whole grain starches when you can.	
In general, a single serving of starch is:	
• ½ cup of cooked cereal, grain, or starchy vegetable	
• ⅓ cup of cooked rice or pasta	
• 1 oz of a bread product (such as 1 slice of whole wheat bread)	
• ¾ to 1 oz of most snack foods (some snack foods may also have extra fat)	
Bread	Serving Size
Bagel (large, about 4 oz)	¼
*Biscuit (2 ½ inches across)	1
Bread (whole wheat, white, or rye) (1 oz)	1 slice
*Cornbread (1 ¾-inch cube or 1 ½ oz)	1
English muffin	½
Hot dog or hamburger bun (1 oz)	½
Pancake (4 inches across, ¼-inch thick)	1
Pita pocket (6 inches across)	½
Roll (plain, small, 1 oz)	1
Tortilla (corn or flour, 6 inches across)	1
*Waffle (4-inch square or 4-inch diameter)	1
Cereals and Grains	Serving Size
Cereals, cooked (oats, oatmeal)	½ cup
Cereals (unsweetened, ready-to-eat)	¾ cup
Couscous	⅓ cup
Granola (low-fat)	¼ cup
Pasta, cooked	⅓ cup
Rice, cooked (white or brown)	⅓ cup
Starchy Vegetables	Serving Size
Corn	½ cup
Corn on cob (4 to 4 ½-inch piece)	½ cob
☺ Hominy, canned	¾ cup
☺ Peas, green	½ cup
Plantain, ripe	⅓ cup
Potato	
Baked with skin (3 oz)	1
Boiled, all kinds (3 oz)	½ cup
French fried (oven-baked) (2 oz)	1 cup
*Mashed with milk and fat	½ cup
! Spaghetti/red pasta sauce	½ cup
☺ Squash, winter	1 cup
Yam, sweet potato, plain	½ cup
Crackers and Snacks	Serving Size
Crackers	
*Round, butter-type	6
Saltines	6
Graham cracker (2 ½-inch square)	3
☺ Popcorn	
*With butter	3 cups
Lower fat or no fat added	3 cups
Pretzels	¾ oz
Snack chips (tortilla chips, potato chips)	
Fat-free or baked (¾ oz)	8 chips
*Regular (¾ oz)	13 chips
Beans, Peas, and Lentils (Count as 1 Starch + 1 Lean Meat)	Serving Size
☺ Baked beans	⅓ cup
☺ Beans, cooked (black, garbanzo, kidney, lima, navy, pinto, white)	½ cup
☺ Lentils, cooked (brown, green, yellow)	½ cup
☺ Peas, cooked (black-eyed, split)	½ cup
FRUITS	
Each serving from this list contains 15 grams carbohydrate, 0 grams fat, 0 grams protein, and 60 calories.	
Fruits are good sources of fiber, regardless of whether they are fresh, frozen, or dried. Fruit juices contain very little fiber. Choose whole fruit instead of juices whenever possible. When using canned fruit, choose fruit packed in its own juice or light syrup.	
In general, a single serving of fruit is:	
• ½ cup of canned or fresh fruit or 4 oz unsweetened fruit juice	
• 1 small fresh fruit (4 oz)	
• 2 tablespoons of dried fruit	
Fruit	Serving Size
Apple, unpeeled (small, 4 oz)	1
Applesauce, unsweetened	½ cup
Banana (extra small, 4 inches long or 4 oz)	1
Berries	
☺ Blackberries	1 cup
Blueberries	¾ cup
☺ Raspberries	1 cup
☺ Strawberries (whole)	1 ¼ cup
Cantaloupe (cubed)	1 cup
Cherries (sweet, fresh, 3 oz)	12
Dried fruits (blueberries, cherries, cranberries, mixed fruit, raisins)	2 tbsp
Grapefruit (large, 11 oz)	½
Grapes (small, 3 oz)	17
Guava (2 small guava)	2 ½ oz
☺ Kiwi (sliced)	½ cup
Mandarin oranges, canned	¾ cup
Mango (small, 5 ½ oz)	½ fruit or ½ cup
☺ Orange (small, 6 ½ oz)	1
Papaya (cubed, 8 oz)	½ fruit or 1 cup
Peaches (fresh, medium, 6 oz)	1
Pears (fresh, large, 4 oz)	½ cup
Pineapple (fresh)	¾ cup
Plums (small)	2
Dried (prunes)	3
Watermelon (diced)	1 ¼ cups
Fruit Juice	Serving Size
Apple, grapefruit, orange, pineapple	½ cup
Fruit juice blends (100% juice)	⅓ cup
Grape juice	⅓ cup
Prune juice	⅓ cup
MILK	
Milk and yogurt are rich in calcium and protein. Choose fat-free, low-fat, and reduced-fat varieties or health. They have less saturated fat and cholesterol than whole milk products.	
Fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk and yogurt: Each serving from this list contains 12 grams carbohydrate, 8 grams protein, 0-3 grams fat, and 100 calories.	
Milk, buttermilk, acidophilus	
milk, Lactaid	1 cup
Evaporated milk	½ cup
Yogurt (plain or Greek; may be flavored with an artificial sweetener, 6 oz)	⅔ cup
Reduced-fat (2%) milk and yogurt: Each serving from this list contains 12 grams carbohydrate, 8 grams protein, 5 grams fat, and 120 calories.	
Milk, acidophilus milk, Lactaid	1 cup
Yogurt (plain, 6 oz)	⅔ cup
Whole milk and yogurt: Each serving from this list contains 12 grams carbohydrate, 8 grams protein, 8 grams fat, and 160 calories.	
Milk, buttermilk, goat's milk	1 cup
Evaporated milk	½ cup
Yogurt (plain, 8 oz)	1 cup
Dairy-like Foods	Serving Size
Chocolate milk (fat-free)	1 cup
Chocolate milk (whole)	1 cup
(1 fat-free milk + 1 carbohydrate)	
Chocolate milk (whole)	1 cup
(1 whole milk + 1 carbohydrate)	
Soy milk (regular, plain)	1 cup
(½ carbohydrate + 1 fat)	
Yogurt with fruit (low-fat, 6 oz)	⅔ cup
(1 fat-free milk + 1 carbohydrate)	

*Hand sizes vary. These portion estimates are based on a woman's hand size. Measuring or weighing foods is the most accurate way to figure out portion size.

FOOD LISTS FOR MEAL PLANNING

NONSTARCHY VEGETABLES

Each serving from this list contains 5 grams carbohydrate, 2 grams protein, and 25 calories.

You should try to eat at least 2 to 3 servings of nonstarchy vegetables each day. Choose a variety of vegetables to benefit from their essential vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. When using canned vegetables, choose no-salt-added versions or rinse.

In general, a single serving of a nonstarchy vegetable is:

- ½ cup of cooked vegetables or vegetable juice
- 1 cup of raw vegetables

- Amaranth or Chinese spinach
Asparagus
Beans (green, wax, Italian)
Bean sprouts
Broccoli
☺ Brussels sprouts
Cabbage (green, bok choy, Chinese)
☺ Carrots
Cauliflower
Celery
Cucumber
Eggplant
Greens (collard, kale, mustard, turnip)
Jicama
Mushrooms
Okra
Onions
Pea pods
☺ Peppers (all varieties)
Radishes
! Sauerkraut
Spinach
Squash (summer, crookneck, zucchini)
Tomatoes (fresh and canned)
! Tomato sauce
! Tomato/vegetable juice
Water chestnuts

SWEETS, DESSERTS, AND OTHER CARBOHYDRATES

Each serving from this list contains 15 grams carbohydrate; protein, fat, and calorie content varies.

You can substitute food choices from this list for other carbohydrate-containing foods (such as those found on the Starch, Fruit, or Milk lists) in your meal plan, even though these foods have added sugars or fat. The foods on this list do not have as many vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Choose foods from this list less often, especially if you are trying to lose weight. Many sugar-free, fat-free, and reduced-fat products are made with ingredients that contain carbohydrates, so check the Total Carbohydrate information on the Nutrition Facts food label. Count each serving as 1 carbohydrate unless otherwise noted.

Food	Serving Size
Brownie (small, unfrosted, about 1 oz)	1
(1 carbohydrate + 1 fat)	
Cake (frosted, 2-inch square)	1
(2 carbohydrates + 1 fat)	
Cake (unfrosted, 2-inch square)	1
(1 carbohydrate + 1 fat)	
Candy bar (chocolate/dark or milk type)	1 oz
(1 ½ carbohydrates + 1 ½ fats)	
Candy (hard)	3 pieces
Cookies (chocolate chip, 2 ¼-inch across)	2
(1 carbohydrate + 2 fats)	
Cookies (vanilla wafer)	5
(1 carbohydrate + 1 fat)	
Doughnut (cake, plain, medium, about 1½ oz)	1
(1 ½ carbohydrates + 2 fats)	
Fruit juice bars (frozen, 100% juice, 3 oz)	1 bar
Gelatin, regular	½ cup
Granola snack bar (regular or low-fat)	¾-oz bar
(1 ½ carbohydrates)	
Honey	1 Tbsp
(1 carbohydrate)	
Hot chocolate (regular, made with water)	
(1 carbohydrate + 1 fat)	1 envelope
Ice cream (light or no sugar added)	½ cup
(1 carbohydrate + 1 fat)	
Ice cream (regular)	½ cup
(1 carbohydrate + 2 fats)	
Jam or jelly (regular)	1 tbsp
Muffin (4 oz)	¼ muffin
(1 carbohydrate + ½ fat)	
Pie (8-inch, 2-crust, fruit)	⅙ pie
(3 carbohydrates + 2 fats)	
Pudding (regular, made with reduced-fat milk)	
(2 carbohydrates)	½ cup
Pudding (sugar-free or sugar- and fat-free, made with fat-free milk)	½ cup
Sports drink (fluid replacement type)	1 cup (8 oz)
Sugar	1 tbsp
Syrup (light, pancake type)	2 tbsp
Syrup (regular, pancake type)	1 tbsp
Yogurt (frozen, fat-free)	⅓ cup

MEAT AND PROTEIN SOURCES

Lean meats and protein sources: Each serving from this list contains 0 grams carbohydrate, 7 grams protein, 0-3 grams fat, and 45 calories.

Meat and protein sources are rich in protein. Whenever possible, choose lean meats. Portion sizes on this list are based on cooked weight, after bone and fat have been removed. The carbohydrate content varies among plant-based proteins, so read food labels carefully.

Food	Serving Size
Beef (Select or Choice grades, trimmed of fat):	
Ground round (90% or higher lean/ 10% or lower fat), roast (chuck, rib, rump), sirloin, steak (cubed, flank, porterhouse, T-bone, tenderloin)	1 oz
Cheeses (with 3 grams of fat or less per oz)	1 oz

Cottage cheese	¼ cup
Egg whites	2
Fish (fresh or frozen, plain):	1 oz
Catfish, cod, flounder, haddock, halibut, orange roughy, salmon, tilapia, trout, tuna	
! Hot dog (with 3 grams of fat or less per oz)	1
Pork (lean):	1 oz
Rib or loin chop/roast, ham, tenderloin, ! Canadian bacon	
Poultry (without skin)	1 oz
Processed sandwich meats (with 3 grams of fat or less per oz)	1 oz
Tuna (canned in water or oil, drained)	1 oz

Medium-fat meat and protein sources: Each serving from this list contains 0 grams carbohydrate, 7 grams protein, 4-7 grams fat, and 75 calories.

Food	Serving Size
Beef:	1 oz
Corned beef, ground beef (85% or lower lean/15% or higher fat), meatloaf, Prime grades trimmed of fat (prime rib)	
Cheeses (with 4-7 grams of fat per oz)	1 oz
Feta, mozzarella, pasteurized processed cheese spread, reduced-fat cheeses, string cheese	
Egg	1
Fish, any fried type	1 oz
Pork (cutlet, ground, shoulder roast)	1 oz
Poultry (with skin or fried)	1 oz
Ricotta cheese (2 oz)	¼ cup
! Sausage (with 4-7 grams of fat per oz)	1 oz

High-fat meat and protein sources: Each serving from this list contains 0 grams carbohydrate, 7 grams protein, 8+ grams fat, and 100 calories.

Food	Serving Size
Bacon (pork)	2 slices
! Bacon (turkey)	3 slices
Cheese (regular):	1 oz
American, bleu, brie, cheddar, hard goat, Monterey jack, parmesan, queso, swiss	
*! Hot dog (beef, pork, or combination)	1
Pork sparerib	1 oz
! Processed sandwich meats (with 8 or more grams of fat per oz):	1 oz
Bologna, pastrami, hard salami	
! Sausage (with 8 or more grams of fat per oz):	1 oz
Bratwurst, chorizo, Italian, knockwurst, Polish, smoked, summer	

Plant-based proteins: Each serving from this list contains 7 grams protein; amount of carbohydrate, fat, and calories varies.

Beans, peas, and lentils are also found on the Starch list. Nut butters in smaller amounts are found in the Fats list.

Food	Serving Size
☺ Beans, lentils, or peas (cooked)	½ cup
(1 starch + 1 lean meat)	
☺ Hummus	⅓ cup
(1 carbohydrate + 1 medium-fat meat)	

Nut spreads: almond butter, cashew butter, peanut butter, soy nut butter	1 tbsp
(1 high-fat meat)	
Tempeh	¼ cup
(1 medium-fat meat)	
Tofu (4 oz)	½ cup
(1 medium-fat meat)	

FATS

Each serving from this list contains 0 grams carbohydrate, 0 grams protein, 5 grams fat, and 45 calories.

Choose heart-healthy fats from the monounsaturated and polyunsaturated groups more often. Saturated fats primarily come from animal sources and are considered unhealthy fats. Trans fat, a product of food processing, is an unhealthy fat and should be avoided.

In general, a single serving of fat is:

- 1 teaspoon of oil or solid fat
- 1 tablespoon of regular salad dressing

Unsaturated Fats	Serving Size
Monounsaturated Fats	
Avocado (medium, 1 oz)	2 tbsp
Nut butters (<i>trans</i> -fat free)	1 ½ tsp
Nuts	
Almonds, cashews	6
Macadamia	3
Peanuts	10
Pecans	4 halves
Oil (canola, olive, peanut)	1 tsp
Olives (black, ripe)	8 large
! Olives (green, stuffed)	10 large

Polyunsaturated Fats	Serving Size
Margarine (lower-fat spread)	1 tbsp
Margarine (stick, tub, or squeeze)	1 tsp
Mayonnaise (reduced-fat)	1 tbsp
Mayonnaise (regular)	1 tsp
Oil (corn, cottonseed, flaxseed, grape seed, safflower, soybean, sunflower)	1 tsp
Salad dressing (reduced-fat [Note: may contain carbohydrate])	2 tbsp
Salad dressing (regular)	1 tbsp

Saturated Fats	Serving Size
Bacon (cooked, regular or turkey)	1 slice
Butter	1 tsp
Cream (half and half)	2 tbsp
Cream cheese (reduced-fat)	1 ½ tbsp
Cream cheese (regular)	1 tbsp
Sour cream (reduced-fat or light)	3 tbsp
Sour cream (regular)	2 tbsp

FREE FOODS

Each serving from this list has 5 grams or less of carbohydrate and less than 20 calories per serving.

Eat up to 3 servings per day of the free foods in the serving size noted without counting any carbohydrates. Choices listed without a serving size can be eaten whenever you like. For better blood

sugar control, spread your servings of these foods over the day.

Low-carbohydrate Foods	Serving Size
Cabbage (raw)	½ cup
Gelatin (sugar-free or unflavored)	free
Gum	free
Jam or jelly (light or no sugar added)	2 tsp
Salad greens	free
Sugar substitutes (low-calorie sweeteners)	free

Modified-fat Foods with Carbohydrates	Serving Size
Cream cheese (fat-free)	1 tbsp
Creamers (nondairy, liquid)	1 ½ tsp
Creamers (nondairy, powdered)	1 tsp
Salad dressing (fat-free or low-fat)	1 tbsp
Salad dressing (fat-free Italian)	2 tbsp

Condiments	Serving Size
Barbecue sauce	2 tsp
Catsup (ketchup)	1 tbsp
Mustard (honey, brown, dijon, horseradish-flavored, wasabi-flavored, or yellow)	1 tbsp

! Pickles (medium-size dill)	1 ½
Salsa	¼ cup
Taco sauce	1 tbsp
Vinegar	free

Drinks/Mixes	
! Bouillon, broth, consommé	free
Carbonated or mineral water, club soda	free
Coffee or tea	free
Diet soft drinks or sugar-free drink mixes	free

Seasonings	
Flavoring extracts	free
Garlic	free
Herbs (fresh or dried)	free
Nonstick cooking spray	free
Spices	free
Worcestershire sauce	free

COMBINATION FOODS

Combination foods contain foods from more than one food list, but with the help of an RD you can fit these foods into your meal plan.

Entrees	Serving Size
! Casserole type:	1 cup
Tuna noodle, lasagna, macaroni and cheese, 8 oz	
(2 carbohydrates + 2 medium-fat meats)	

Frozen Meals	Serving Size
!☺Burrito (beef and bean, 5 oz)	1

(3 carbohydrates + 1 lean meat + 2 fats)	
! Pizza (cheese/vegetarian, thin crust)	¼ of a 12-inch pie
(2 carbohydrates + 2 medium-fat meats)	

Soups	Serving Size
! Bean, lentil, or split pea	1 cup
(1 carbohydrate + 1 lean meat)	
! Tomato (made with water)	1 cup
(1 carbohydrate)	

Alcohol
In general, 1 alcohol equivalent (½ oz absolute alcohol, also known as ethanol, or ethyl alcohol) has about 100 calories. One alcohol equivalent is 12 oz beer +½ carbohydrate or 1 ½ oz distilled spirits or 5 oz wine. If you choose to drink alcohol, limit it to 1 drink or less per day if you are a woman and 2 drinks or less per day if you are a man.

FAST FOOD

The choices in the Fast Foods list are not specific fast food meals or items but are estimates based on popular foods.

Chicken breast, breaded and fried	1 (about 7 oz)
(1 carbohydrate + 6 medium-fat proteins)	
Chicken wing, breaded and fried	1 wing
(½ carbohydrate + 2 medium-fat proteins)	
1 main dish salad (grilled chicken-type, no dressing or croutons)	1 salad (about 11 ½ oz)
(1 carbohydrate + 4 lean proteins)	
Pizza with cheese, pepperoni or sausage, thin crust	⅛ of a 14-inch pizza (about 2 ¾ oz)
(1 ½ carbohydrates + 1 high-fat protein + 1 fat)	
! Asian beef/chicken/shrimp with vegetables in sauce	1 cup
(1 carbohydrate + 2 lean proteins + 1 fat)	
Taco crisp, with meat and cheese	1 small taco
(1 carbohydrate +1 medium-fat protein + ½ fat)	
Hamburger regular with bun and condiments (catsup, mustard, onion, pickle)	1 burger (about 3 ½ oz)
(2 carbohydrates +1 medium-fat protein + 1 fat)	
French fries	1 small order
(2 ½ carbohydrates + 2 fats)	
Milkshake, any flavor	1 small shake (12 fl oz)
(5 ½ carbohydrates + 3 fats)	

These Food Lists are not intended to be all-inclusive. Consult with your RD about any foods that you eat which are not listed.

RESOURCES

American Association of Diabetes Educators

www.diabeteseducator.org

American Diabetes Association

www.diabetes.org

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

www.eatright.org

The Official Pocket Guide to Diabetic Exchanges

American Diabetes Association, 2015.

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Diabetes Care and Education (DCE), a dietetic practice group of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, promotes quality diabetes care and education. DCE comprises members of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics who are leaders in the field of medical nutrition therapy (MNT) and care of people with diabetes. Their expertise is widely recognized throughout the diabetes community. We are pleased to have had the opportunity to collaborate with this group of professionals on the creation of Lilly's **Daily Diabetes Meal Planning Guide**.

We hope you find this resource useful.

