Why Is Carbohydrate Counting Important?
- Helps to control blood glucose level so that you feel better
- Helps you plan your meals
- Ideally, you should have a consistent amount of carbohydrates in your diet throughout the day – in other words, don’t eat them all in one meal

Which Foods Have Carbohydrates?
- Breadfruit (‘ulu)
- Taro
- Sweet potato
- Yams
- Rice
- Coconut
- Corn
- Bread
- Cereal
- Chips
- Cookies
- Sweets
- Fruits
- Juice
- Milk
- Soda
Carbohydrates in Meal Planning

- In diabetes meal planning, one carbohydrate choice, or “carb choice” has about 15 grams of carbohydrate.
- Read Nutrition Facts on food labels to know how many grams of carbohydrate are in foods you eat.

Meal-Planning Tips

- For many adults, eating 3–5 carb choices at each meal and 1–2 carb choices for each snack works well.
- Check your blood glucose regularly to see if you need to adjust when you eat carbohydrates.
- Eating foods that have fiber, such as vegetables and whole grains, is very good for controlling your blood sugar.
- Eat 4–6 ounces of fish, chicken, or lean meat each day for your healthy protein source.

Label-Reading Tips

- Pay attention to the label’s standard serving size and servings per container/package.
  - In this example, the serving size is 1 ounce or about 21 pieces.

- Check the total grams of carbohydrate. This is the amount of carbohydrate in one standard serving.
  - In this example, the total grams of carbohydrate is 14 grams per serving.

- Divide the grams of total carbohydrate by 15 to find the number of carbohydrate choices in one standard serving.
  - In this example, the amount of carbohydrate choices you would get if you ate ONE serving would be one carbohydrate choice.
Examples of 1 Carbohydrate Choice
Each choice has about 15 grams of carbohydrate

Starches
- 2 pieces of breadfruit (2 ounces)
- 1 slice of bread (1 ounce)
- 1/3 cup cooked rice (white or brown)
- ¾ cup unsweetened cereal, ready-to-eat
- ½ cup sugar-frosted cereal, ready-to-eat
- 1 single-serving bag of potato chips
- ½ hamburger bun or hot dog bun (¾ ounce)
- 4–6 crackers (average size)
- 1/3 cup pasta

Fruit
- 1 small fresh fruit (¾–1 cup)
- 1 medium-sized banana
- ½ papaya or mango
- ½ cup canned or frozen fruit
- 2 tablespoons dried fruit (apricots, raisins, prunes, blueberries, cranberries, etc.)
- 15 medium grapes
- ¾ cup fresh pineapple
- ½ cup apple, grapefruit, orange, or pineapple juice
- 1/3 cup grape or cranberry juice

Starchy Vegetables/Beans
- ½ cup cooked beans or peas
- ½ cup corn
- ½ cup cooked sweet potato
- 1/3 cup cooked yams or taro
- ½ cup mashed potato

Milk
- 1 cup fat-free or reduced-fat milk
- ½ cup chocolate milk
- ½ cup evaporated milk
- 1 cup soy milk (unsweetened)
- 2/3 cup plain yogurt
- 2 cups almond milk (unsweetened)
- ½ cup rice milk (unsweetened)

Sweets and Desserts
- 2-inch-square cake (unfrosted)
- 2 small cookies (2/3 ounce)
- ½ cup ice cream or pudding
- ½ fruit toaster pastry
- 1 tablespoon syrup, jam, jelly, sugar, agave, or honey
## Sample Meal Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breakfast</th>
<th>Lunch</th>
<th>Dinner</th>
<th>Snacks (if recommended)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 pieces breadfruit</td>
<td>3 oz grilled fish</td>
<td>3 oz lean chicken</td>
<td>1 slice of bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ papaya</td>
<td>½ cup cooked taro</td>
<td>½ cup cooked brown rice</td>
<td>1 Tbsp peanut butter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 boiled egg</td>
<td>1 small salad w/light dressing</td>
<td>1 cup broccoli</td>
<td>Unsweetened iced tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 cup 1% milk</td>
<td>1 medium-sized banana</td>
<td>1 cup cooked carrots</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee/tea</td>
<td>1 cup melon</td>
<td>1 small apple</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 cup light yogurt</td>
<td>1 cup 1% milk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Portion Control

- One fist clenched = 8 fluid ounces
  - Cold and hot beverages
- Two hands, cupped = 1 cup
  - Breakfast cereal
  - Soup
  - Green salads (lettuce or spinach)
  - Mixed dishes (chili, stew, macaroni and cheese)
  - Chinese food
- One hand, cupped = 1/2 cup
  - Pasta, rice
  - Hot cereal (oatmeal, farina)
  - Fruit salad, berries, applesauce
  - Tomato or spaghetti sauce
  - Beans (cooked or canned)
- Palm of hand = 3 ounces
  - Cooked meats (hamburger patty, chicken breast, fish fillet, pork loin)
  - Canned fish (tuna, salmon)
- Two thumbs together = 1 tablespoon
  - Peanut butter
  - Dessert sauces
  - Salad dressing
  - Margarine
  - Sour cream
  - Cream cheese
  - Mayonnaise
  - Whipped topping

*Adapted from MyPyramid.gov. This handout is only a guide. The amounts of foods in your meal plan may be different. Provided as a FREE educational service on www.learningaboutdiabetes.org. © 2008 Learning About Diabetes, Inc. All rights reserved.*

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