

## What should you avoid?

- Too much salt, as it can lead to an increase in blood pressure.
- Too much saturated fat is linked to:
  - Increased cholesterol levels, which can lead to an increased risk of heart disease.
  - Weight gain.

Being overweight creates its own health risks, but it also makes a difference to your diabetes control:

- The insulin in your body finds it particularly difficult to move glucose out of your blood and into fatty tissue; so the more weight you carry, the more insulin you may need to inject.
- Of course, the opposite is true too; if you lose weight, you should need less insulin. That's why blood glucose testing is so important when you are on a diet.



## Customer Care Line

| Country   | Customer Care Line | Operating Hours    |
|-----------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Australia | 1-800-801478       | Mon-Fri 8.00-18.00 |

Leaflet produced by Abbott Diabetes Care, manufacturer of



Ask your healthcare professional how Optium Omega, Optium Xceed or FreeStyle Lite blood glucose meters may assist you, always read the label and use only as directed.

If you are a user of an ADC meter in Australia, call Customer Service on 1800 801 478, or register on line at [www.abbottdiabetescare.com.au](http://www.abbottdiabetescare.com.au) to activate your lifetime meter warranty.

**References:** 1. Joslin's Diabetes Mellitus, 14th Edition 2005, New York Ovid Technologies. 2. National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases of the National Institutes of Health Bethesda, Md. NIDDK. 3. Kronenberg: Williams Textbook of Endocrinology 11th Edition 2008.

Please consult your healthcare professional before making any changes.

Abbott Diabetes Care, 666 Doncaster Road, Doncaster, Victoria 3108, Australia. [www.abbottdiabetescare.com.au](http://www.abbottdiabetescare.com.au)  
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Diabetes Care



# Healthy eating and diabetes



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## Food – how it affects the glucose in your blood

**The experts say that a healthy diet for someone with diabetes is the same as a healthy diet for anyone else. Plenty of vegetable and starchy carbohydrates, moderate amounts of fruit and minimum intake of fats, sugars and salt.**

But when you have diabetes it's important to understand how the foods you eat affect your blood glucose.

So where does the glucose in your blood come from?

- **Digesting the carbohydrates you eat**

Carbohydrates form the main source of sugar in your blood.

There are two main sources:

- Starchy carbohydrates (found in whole meal bread or pasta, for example) are broken down into sugars and absorbed slowly. This slow absorption keeps blood sugar levels smoother.
- Carbohydrates in sugary foods (such as cakes or sweets) are absorbed quickly, making your blood glucose levels rise more rapidly.

- **Producing sugar inside your body**

Your body can also produce a sugar (called glycogen) internally from a special store in the liver. **Glycogen** is your body's emergency sugar store. If your blood glucose falls too low, your liver immediately starts breaking down your glycogen stores to make sugar.



## Where does the sugar go?

Sugar is your body's main fuel. Your muscles and brain need it, just like a car needs petrol. Your blood carries sugar around your body to where it is needed.

To get the sugar out of your blood and into your tissues you need insulin.

Insulin will either:

- Move the glucose from your blood into your muscles and brain for energy.
- Store it in your liver (as glycogen).
- Store it under your skin and around your organs as fat.

When you treat your diabetes with insulin, you try to match the amount of insulin you inject with the food you eat.

When you take tablets to treat Type 2 diabetes, you must eat regularly to match the effect of your tablets. The tablets you take help the insulin in your body work more effectively.

## What else should you eat in a healthy diet?

In addition to carbohydrates you need to eat:

- **Fruit and vegetables** – Try to spread your intake of fruit out over the day to avoid any sudden rises in your blood glucose levels.
- **Meat, fish and protein alternatives (e.g. tofu)** – Eat a variety of proteins and choose low fat options where you can, for instance:
  - Lean ham in preference to pork pies.
  - Chicken without the skin.
  - Pulses (lentils and beans).
- **Milk and dairy foods** – Dairy products such as yoghurt and milk contain calcium, needed for healthy bones and teeth. Adults should look for the low fat versions.
- **Small amounts of fats, sugars and salt:**
  - Don't cut fats completely, but do keep your intake to a minimum.
  - Use herbs for extra flavour rather than salt.
  - Cut down on sugar where you can. You might try some of the intense sweeteners instead.