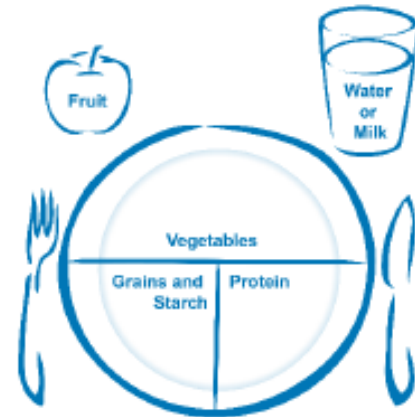


Top 8 Tips for Eating Well over the Holidays:

1) Use the Plate Method at social gatherings

Fill half your plate with vegetables, a quarter with protein foods, and a quarter with grains and starches.

By filling half your plate with veggies/fruits, one quarter with protein foods and one quarter with starches and grains, you will be sure to get all the nutrients you need to fuel your body and feel great while still maintaining good blood sugar control.



Potatoes, sweet potatoes, and corn count as a starch. If you're out at a restaurant, ask about adding or substituting a side of cooked veggies or a salad.

Example food choices:

- **Vegetables:** green beans, broccoli, carrots, spinach, zucchini, onions, cabbage, tomatoes, peppers
- **Grains and starches:** breads, pasta, rice, quinoa, oatmeal, roti, potatoes, yams, sweet potatoes, corn
- **Protein:** fish, chicken, beef, pork, beans, lentils, eggs, peanut butter, nuts, cheese, Greek yogurt

2) Bring along a dish or two to share

Family and friends may not be aware of how best to support people managing diabetes. Bringing a dish along is not only good for you, but also for those you are sharing with!

Hint: include whole grains or non-starchy vegetables

Good recipe resources:

- American Diabetes Association Diabetes Food Hub Website: diabetesfoodhub.org/
- Diabetes Canada Website: diabetes.ca/
- Sechelt Public Library and Gibsons Public Library cookbooks

3) Avoid Skipping Meals

Spread out your carbohydrate intake over the day rather than “saving up” your carbs before a larger meal. This improves appetite regulation and helps you avoid overeating carbohydrates.

Note: Insulin and some medications can increase your risk of having a low blood sugar. Speak with your physician or pharmacist if you are concerned about this.

4) Listen to your hunger and fullness cues



Check in with your body before, during, and after mealtimes. Did you know it can take about 15-20 minutes for your feelings of fullness to “catch up” after your last bite?

Take your time during meals. Aim to stay within the blue zone (4-7) and when you reach 6, take a break before seconds.

10 -- Extremely stuffed, nauseous
9 -- Stuffed, very uncomfortable
8 -- Overfull, somewhat uncomfortable
7 -- Full but not uncomfortable
6 -- Satisfied, but could eat a little more
5 -- Starting to feel hungry
4 -- Hungry, stomach growling
3 -- Uncomfortably hungry, distracted, irritable
2 -- Very hungry, low energy, weak and dizzy
1 -- Starving, no energy, very weak

5) Plan for a Dessert

All foods fit, barring allergy or intolerance.

It is a myth that people with diabetes can't have dessert. Be picky! What desserts do you really enjoy? Promise yourself that you will have a few favourites over the holidays and aim to make nutritious choices the rest of the time.

Plan ahead – reduce carbs on your dinner plate. If you are including a higher carbohydrate dessert after a meal, plan ahead! Consume it directly following a meal, and limit your portion of carbohydrate before dessert. For example, if you are planning on including a slice of pie after a supper meal, take a smaller portion of roasted potatoes or skip the dinner rolls. When you eat a dessert directly after a meal, the protein and fibre from your meal will help slow the digestion and absorption of the carbohydrates from the dessert.

Split a dessert with a friend Use a sugar substitute. Another option is to split a dessert with a friend, so you are able to indulge your craving without sending blood sugars soaring.

Homemade with a sugar substitute can also be a good way to limit carbohydrate intake. Sugar substitutes include sucralose (Splenda), saccharine, stevia, monkfruit

extract, aspartame (Equal), acesulfame potassium, cyclamate (Sweet n Low), sugar alcohols (sorbitol, erythritol, xylitol). Sugar substitutes can be used safely in moderation. Sugar alcohols, commonly found in low sugar candy, may cause gastrointestinal pain, bloating, and diarrhea depending on the person

Remember: all types of sugars raise your blood glucose in the same way, including white sugar, brown sugar, maple syrup, agave, coconut sugar, etc.

6) Be Mindful of your Beverage Choices

Choose sugar-sweetened beverages and fruit juices less often:

- Eggnog
- Cocktail and highball mixers
- Sugar-sweetened sodas
- Hot chocolate

Choose most often:

- Sparkling water (Bubbly, AHA, etc.)
- Club soda with a wedge of lemon or lime
- Diet cranberry cocktails
- Diet sodas
- Coffee or tea
- Water
- If you need additional calories: Glucerna or Boost Diabetic

7) Get Moving!

Incorporate some enjoyable movement into your holiday routine. A brisk walk after meals can help control post-meal blood sugars. In general, aim for 150 minutes of movement each week

(that's 30 minutes per day for 5 out of 7 days)

8) Don't be too hard on yourself!

When dining at a restaurant or a loved one's home, you won't be able to control every aspect of the meal you're provided - and that's ok

Holidays are a tough time for some and have additional stressors unrelated to managing your health and diabetes. Don't beat yourself up if everything doesn't go perfectly – one meal or blood sugar result will not make or break your health. Be kind to yourself, banish the guilt, and make a plan for next time!

Be mindful of the 80/20 rule – 80% of the time, make food choices that will support your optimal health and blood sugar control. 20% of the time, give yourself a bit of a break. Your 20% is for enjoying a holiday dessert!