

## IS THE DASH DIET HELPFUL FOR TYPE 2 DIABETES?

The DASH diet, which stands for Dietary Approach to Stop Hypertension, was designed to lower blood pressure. Like the Mediterranean diet, the DASH diet emphasizes plant-based foods, such as fruits, vegetables, dried legumes, whole grains, nuts, and seeds. It also includes fish, poultry, and low-fat dairy products. It limits red meat, sweets, and foods high in saturated fat, sodium, or added sugar.

According to a recent review, the DASH diet can be a nutrient-rich and sustainable eating plan for people with type 2 diabetes. It can also help reduce:

- Blood pressure.
- Blood cholesterol.
- Insulin resistance.
- Body weight.

A recent study in 80 people with type 2 diabetes found that following the DASH diet for 12 weeks led to significant reductions in cholesterol and triglyceride levels, which could help protect against diabetes-related complications in the long term.

## CAN I FOLLOW A VEGETARIAN OR VEGAN DIET WITH TYPE 2 DIABETES?

Vegetarian diets don't contain any red meat or poultry, and they often don't contain seafood. Vegan diets don't contain any animal products at all, including meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, or dairy. Instead, these diets emphasize plant-based sources of protein, such as:

- Tofu / Tempeh / Beans / Lentils / Split peas / Nuts / Seeds / Grains.

They also include a wide variety of fruits and vegetables. Vegetarians typically eat eggs and dairy, but vegans don't. One review of six studies found that vegetarian diets were associated with lower levels of fasting blood sugar and long-term blood sugar management.

However, while it is possible to follow a vegetarian or vegan diet while meeting your nutritional needs with type 2 diabetes, not all vegetarian and vegan diets are created equal. Furthermore, just because a food is vegetarian or vegan doesn't mean that it contains beneficial nutrients. Sometimes, when people try to follow a vegetarian or vegan diet, they don't eat enough protein or sources of vitamins and minerals. For optimum health, eat a wide variety of foods and ensure that you're getting the key nutrients you need. If in doubt, a dietitian can advise you on what foods to include in your meal plan to meet your nutritional needs.

## DIABETES NUTRITION TAKEAWAY

Whichever diet or eating pattern you choose to follow, it's best to eat a full variety of nutrient-rich foods and practice portion management.

Make an effort to limit your consumption of saturated fats, trans fats, high cholesterol foods, and added sugars. Your doctor or dietitian can also help you develop a sustainable meal planning approach that fits your health needs and lifestyle.

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# PREHABILITATION HEALTH CONDITIONS TYPE 2 DIABETES NUTRITION

If you live with type 2 diabetes, eating a balanced diet can help you manage your blood sugar levels and weight.

In turn, if your meal plan helps you achieve a healthier weight for your body and keep your blood sugar levels in your target range, it may reduce your risk for complications such as nerve damage, heart disease, and stroke, according to a recent study.

Read on to learn more about how different diets and eating patterns can affect your health and impact your management of type 2 diabetes.

## FOODS TO EAT WITH TYPE 2 DIABETES

You can follow many different eating patterns and diets to meet your health needs. With type 2 diabetes, be sure to pick a diet rich in nutrient-dense foods, which can help provide the fibre, vitamins, and minerals that your body needs.

You should also be sure to enjoy a variety of heart-healthy fats, including monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fatty acids. These can help reduce your cholesterol levels to support heart health. Similarly, eating plenty of foods high in fibre can enhance blood sugar management and help keep you feeling fuller for longer to help prevent eating when you're not hungry.

Your diet should also be sustainable and easy to follow. Diet plans that are overly restrictive or don't fit your lifestyle can be much harder to stick with in the long run. Here are some examples of nutritious foods that your diet should include:

- Fruits (apples, oranges, berries, melons, pears, peaches).
- Vegetables (like broccoli, cauliflower, spinach, cucumbers, zucchini).
- Whole grains (quinoa, oats, brown rice, farro).
- Legumes (beans, lentils, chickpeas).
- Nuts (almonds, walnuts, pistachios, macadamia nuts, cashews).
- Seeds (chia seeds, pumpkin seeds, flax seeds, hemp seeds).
- Protein-rich foods (skinless poultry, seafood, lean cuts of red meat, tofu, tempeh).
- Heart-healthy fats (olive oil, avocados, canola oil, sesame oil).
- Beverages (water, black coffee, unsweetened tea, vegetable juice).

## FOODS TO AVOID WITH TYPE 2 DIABETES

There aren't many foods that you need to avoid entirely when you have type 2 diabetes. However, some foods are more nutrient-dense choices than others. This means they're richer sources of vitamins and minerals. Plus, they contain less fat, sugar, and cholesterol. Limiting your consumption of foods high in saturated fat, trans fat, and added sugar can help support better blood sugar management and prevent health complications related to diabetes, according to the latest research. Here are some of the foods you should limit with type 2 diabetes:

- High fat meat (fatty cuts of pork, beef, and lamb, poultry skin, dark meat chicken).
- Full-fat dairy (whole milk, butter, cheese, sour cream).
- Sweets (candy, cookies, baked goods, ice cream, desserts).
- Sugar-sweetened beverages (juice, soda, sweet tea, sports drinks).
- Sweeteners (table sugar, brown sugar, honey, maple syrup, molasses).
- Processed foods (chips, microwave popcorn, processed meat, convenience meals).
- Trans fats (vegetable shortening, fried foods, dairy-free coffee creamers, partially hydrogenated oil).

## CARB COUNTING FOR TYPE 2 DIABETES

Carbohydrate counting is one approach that you can take to help manage your blood sugar levels. In carb counting, you add up the number of grams of carbohydrates that you eat during each meal. With careful tracking, you can learn how many grams of carbohydrates you need to eat to maintain a safe blood sugar level while taking insulin injections. A doctor, nurse, or dietitian can help you get started. Many foods contain carbohydrates, including:

- Wheat, rice, and other grains and grain-based foods.
- Dried beans, lentils, and other legumes.
- Potatoes and other starchy vegetables.
- Fruit and fruit juice.
- Milk and yogurt.
- Processed snack foods, desserts, and sweetened beverages.

There are many books and online resources that you can use to learn how many grams of carbohydrates are found in portions of common foods. You can also check the nutritional labels of packaged and processed foods.

## WHAT ARE THE PROS AND CONS OF THE KETO DIET FOR TYPE 2 DIABETES?

The keto diet is a low carb diet that emphasizes foods rich in protein and fat, such as meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, cheese, nuts, and seeds. It also includes non-starchy vegetables, such as broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, kale, and other leafy greens. It limits foods high in carbohydrates, including grains, dried legumes, root vegetables, fruits, and sweets. Typically, ketogenic diets only include between 20 and 50 grams of carbohydrates per day.

According to a recent study, low carb diets could help enhance blood sugar management in people with type 2 diabetes while also improving levels of triglycerides, HDL (good) cholesterol, improve blood sugar levels and reduce insulin resistance.

However, depending on the protein-rich foods that you choose, the keto diet and many other low carb diets can be high in saturated fat. You can decrease your consumption of saturated fat by limiting the amount of red meat, fatty cuts of pork, and high fat cheese that you eat. It can also be challenging to get enough fibre while following the keto diet. For this reason, it's important to eat plenty of low carb foods that are rich in fibre, including nuts, seeds, and leafy greens.

## IS THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET HELPFUL FOR TYPE 2 DIABETES?

The Mediterranean diet is an eating pattern that emphasizes plant-based foods, including fruits, vegetables, dried legumes, whole grains, nuts, seeds, and olive oil. It also limits red meat and includes small portions of fish, poultry, egg, and dairy products.

The Mediterranean diet aims to be rich in vitamins, minerals, fibre, and healthy fats. It's low in cholesterol, saturated fat, trans fats, and added sugars.

A review of research found that people with type 2 diabetes who follow the Mediterranean diet tend to have lower blood sugar levels than those who follow a conventional diet. The Mediterranean diet has also been linked to reduced weight and decreased cholesterol and blood pressure levels.

What's more, one study noted that following the Mediterranean diet long-term could be linked to a 20–23 percent lower risk of developing type 2 diabetes and a 28–30 percent lower risk of heart problems.

