UW Medicine

Food Choice Lists
For carbohydrate counting

Always read the Nutrition Facts label on packaged foods for the most accurate data.

Carbohydrates

Starch Choices: Breads, Grains, Starchy Vegetables

(1 choice = 15 grams carbohydrate)

- 1 slice bread (1 oz.)
- ½ hamburger bun (1 oz.)
- ¼ large bagel (1 oz.)
- ½ English muffin
- 1 6-inch tortilla
- 2 4-inch pancakes
- $^1/_3$ cup cooked pasta
- $^1/_3$ cup cooked rice
- ½ cup cooked cereal
- ¾ cup dry cereal
- 1 small potato (3 oz.)
- ½ cup sweet potato
- 1 cup winter squash
- ½ cup beans or lentils
- ½ cup mashed potato
- ¾ oz. pretzels
- 3 cups light popcorn

Quick Guide to Carb Counting

Carb Choices	Grams
1	15
2	30
3	45
4	60
5	75

Fruit Choices

(1 choice = 15 grams carbohydrate)

- 1 small to medium fresh fruit
- 1 small or ½ large banana
- 10 to 15 grapes
- 1 cup melon
- 1 cup berries
- ½ cup canned fruit
- ½ cup juice (4 oz.)
- ¼ cup dried fruit
- 2 tablespoons raisins

Milk Choices

(1 choice = 12 grams carbohydrate)

- 1 cup milk or buttermilk (nonfat, 1%, 2%, whole)
- 1 cup unsweetened plant-based milk: soy, rice, coconut, oat, almond, cashew, and others*
- ¾ cup yogurt, plain, low-fat
- $^2/_3$ cup yogurt, sweetened with no-calorie sweetener

* *For plant-based milks, always check the Total Carbohydrates on the Nutrition Facts label. Products may contain more or less than 12 grams carbohydrate in 1 serving.*

Sweets and Other Carbohydrates

(1 choice = 15 grams carbohydrate)

- ½ cup ice cream
- ¼ cup sherbet
- 1 tablespoon jam, sugar, honey, or syrup
- 10 to 12 potato or tortilla chips
- ½ cup frozen yogurt
- ½ cup sugar-free pudding
- 2 small cookies
- Mini-muffin (1 oz.)

Proteins and Fats

Most foods that are mainly protein or fat contain little or no carbohydrate.

Examples of Protein Foods

- lean meat, fish, or poultry
- peanut butter
- low-fat cheese
- eggs, egg whites
- cottage cheese
- tuna or salmon, canned in water
- tofu
- parmesan cheese

Examples of Fat Foods

- butter
- cream cheese
- half-and-half
- coconut oil
- avocado
- nuts
- vegetable oil (canola, corn, olive, safflower, soybean)
- mayonnaise

"Free" Foods

A "free" food has no more than 5 grams carbohydrate and 20 calories per serving. Limit free foods to 3 servings a day. Or, if you eat larger servings, count them as part of your daily carbohydrate choices. Most non-starchy vegetables are considered "free." They do not need to be included in your carbohydrate counting.

Here are examples of 1 serving of a "free" food:

- 1 cup non-starchy vegetables
- ¼ cup salsa
- 1 tablespoon fat-free cream cheese
- Diet or sugar-free beverages
- 1 cup broth
- Sugar-free gelatin
- 2 teaspoons light or low-sugar jam
- Most spices

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

Diabetes Institute:
206.598.4882

UW Medicine Neighborhood Clinics: 206.520.5000

Other patients: Please call your healthcare provider:

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