

Diabetes? Don't Fear These Foods!

Diabetes shouldn't have you fearing your food! Too many people give up delicious, nutritious foods

because they have some vague idea that blood sugars go wonky when they eat certain things. Have no fear! While it's a good idea to limit baked goods and greasy fast food, you can nearly always find room for nutrient-dense foods like these.

Whole-Grain Pasta. This inexpensive, quick-to-prepare dinner staple can stay on the menu. Just be cautious with your portion. Piling on the pasta is what spikes blood glucose. It's not the pasta itself; it's the amount of pasta. A full cup of spaghetti provides nearly 45 grams of carbohydrate. If that's more than your meal plan allows or if you're eating other carb-rich foods at the same meal, cut back to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup or even less. Mix it with non-starchy vegetables to bulk up the portion without overloading the carbs.

White Potatoes. There's no reason to shun this nutrient-rich food. Again, watch your portion. About $\frac{1}{2}$ cup potato provides 15 grams carbohydrate, about the same as a slice of bread or small piece of fruit. Potatoes also give us blood pressure-friendly potassium, vitamin C, dietary fiber, & magnesium, a mineral that may help with blood sugar control.

Bananas. Just because they're white and have a high glycemic index, many people think bananas are bad for blood



sugar control. But the banana is also packed with nutrition. A medium fruit has about 30 grams of carbohydrate, twice the amount of a small apple or peach or a full cup of blackberries. To get slightly fewer carbs, eat bananas that are a bit green.

Avocados. They're high in calories, but they also give us heart-healthy fats. Replacing unhealthy saturated and trans fats with good-for-you unsaturated fats is a boon to the heart and might even improve insulin resistance. Avocados also provide potassium, vitamin E, and more.

Fruit Juice. Tossing a glass of juice down your throat in one giant swallow will likely raise blood sugar more than slowly eating a small piece of fruit. But 100% fruit juice is also nutrient-dense and most likely doesn't need to be avoided. Measure out 3 to 4 ounces (equivalent to a fruit serving) and drink it at a reasonable pace. Learn the carb counts of your favorite juices and count them toward your meal allowance.

By Jill Weisenberger, MS, RDN, CDE, FAND, CHWC



Make Small Dietary Shifts

People need to shift to healthier food and drink choices. Today, let's look at exactly what that means for the dietary components that can put your health at risk.

Small Shifts in Sugar:

What We Eat in America (WWEIA): We get about 13 percent of our daily calories from added sugars. Children, adolescents, and young adults consume even more. Most comes from sugar-sweetened drinks, snacks, and sweets.

Shift: The new Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) say to get less than 10 percent of our calories from added sugars. This means we need to shift away from sugary foods.

Small Shifts in Saturated Fat:

WWEIA: More than two-thirds of Americans consume too much saturated fat. Much of this comes from mixed dishes that contain meat and/or cheese — think burgers, tacos, and pizza.

Shift: The DGA says to consume less than 10 percent of our calories from saturated fat. We need to shift away from full-fat dairy products, fatty meats, solid fats, and hydrogenated vegetable oils and shift toward healthier monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats.

Small Shifts in Sodium:

WWEIA: American adults

consume about 50% more sodium than what's recommended. Most comes from sodium added during commercial food processing and preparation. Mixed dishes like burgers, sandwiches, soups, and rice, pasta, and grain dishes are the main culprits.

Shift: A healthy eating pattern contains less than 2300mg of sodium a day. We need to shift to less processed and packaged items.

Remember, you don't have to make changes all at once. One by one, shifts in what you eat can help you maintain a healthy weight, meet nutrient needs, and reduce your chronic disease risk.

By Hollis Bass, MEd, RD, LD

Healthy Snacking: Energy Bites

Snack choices for kids may not always be nutritious ones. The supermarket shelves are flooded with boxes and bags of irresistible treats loaded with refined grains, added sugars, and saturated fat. In our busy culture, there are times when snacks are used as a substitute for a well-balanced meal. Providing our kids with nutritious options is important for their growth, but finding something tasty that's also easy to prepare can be a challenge. The new trend of making and eating energy bites is a perfect solution to this snacking dilemma.

Energy bites are a homemade combination of whole grains, nuts and seeds, dried fruit, and other ingredients rolled together into a little ball of deliciousness. They require no cooking, so making them is a terrific activity in which to have kids participate. Not only is it fun, but research has shown that when children have a hand in the food preparation process, they are more likely to eat what they make.

When making your own energy bites, you can choose a binder ingredient such as nut butter or Nutella, and real maple syrup, agave, or honey as sources of sweeteners. The add-in list is never-ending with ingredients such as flax seeds, chia seeds, dried cranberries, raisins, chopped nuts, cocoa powder, chocolate chips (for a treat), shredded coconut, and chopped dates. You can choose more than one add-in by making the total amount of add-ins equal to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a cup. For an extra kick of flavor, experiment with adding a pinch of spice, such as cinnamon, nutmeg, or cayenne pepper.

Once you have your ingredients selected, place them in a large bowl and mix until blended. Using your hands, roll one tablespoon of the mixture into a ball and place it onto a cookie sheet lined with waxed paper. Repeat with the rest of the mixture. Place the tray in the freezer for one hour. Save the leftovers in a sealable container in your refrigerator or freezer, depending on the texture you prefer.

By Beth Rosen, MS, RD, CDN

| Energy Bites Formula | Sample Recipe | Sample Recipe |
|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 cup quick oats | 1 cup quick oats | 1 cup quick oats |
| 1/2 cup binder | 1/2 cup sunflower butter | 1/2 cup peanut butter |
| 3/4 cup add-ins | 1/2 cup chia seeds | 1/2 cup mini chocolate chips |
| | 1/4 cup dried cherries | 1/4 cup ground flax seed |
| 1/3 cup sweetener | 1/3 cup honey | 1/3 cup maple syrup |



Asian Broccoli Salad

Serves: 6 | Serving Size: 1 cup

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon light soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons flavored vinegar
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons nonfat plain yogurt
- 2 carrots, peeled & sliced
- 2 cups broccoli florets
- 2 cups shredded cabbage

Directions:

Steam broccoli florets until just crisp-tender.

Combine first four ingredients in a large mixing bowl. Add the rest of the ingredients and mix well. Chill for several hours and mix again.

Serve on a platter or 6 small plates.

Nutrition Information:

Serves 6. Each serving has 42 calories, 0 g fat, 0 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 205 mg sodium, 9 g carbohydrate, 2 g dietary fiber, 5 g sugar, and 2 g protein.

Each serving also has 84% DV vitamin A, 61% DV vitamin C, 4% DV calcium, and 5% DV iron.

Chef's Tips:

This recipe works best with fresh broccoli.

Spicy and/or fruity vinegars are a real treat in this dish.