

# Grocery shopping 101:

## Shopping smart to manage your diabetes

Shopping for food when you have diabetes can be challenging, but it can also be an enjoyable experience when you have a plan. This guide will help you get organized before you go to your grocery store and help you keep on track with your food choices once you get there.

### Make a list

Deciding which healthy foods you want to buy and then making a shopping list will help you shop smarter and faster. If something is not on the list, don't buy it without carefully thinking about how the food might fit into your healthy eating plan. Produce, fish or lean meat that look fresh and are the right price can be good last-minute purchases.

If possible, don't shop when you are hungry. It is easier to stick with your list and avoid buying less healthy foods that you don't really want or need.

### Take a healthy route through the store

Start your shopping along the outside walls of the store. This is where the fresh vegetables, fruit and other produce, meats, fish, deli and dairy products are located. Fill your cart with these foods first. They generally are healthier, higher in fiber and lower in sodium than the more processed foods in the center of the store.



### Produce

All foods in the produce section are acceptable because they are generally lower in calories and they provide vitamins, minerals, fiber and antioxidants. But be aware that some starchy vegetables and all fruits are carbohydrate sources and can affect your blood sugar. Try varying your diet with different colored fruits and vegetables each day.



### Meats and fish

These protein-rich foods do not contain carbohydrates, but their saturated fat and obesity.

Eating smaller portions can limit saturated fat and calories and save money. Choosing fish and skinless poultry more often than red meat and choosing meat with little fat running through it can also cut down on saturated fat and calories.

### Deli options

Key words at the deli are low-sodium, lean, reduced-fat and natural. Both meats and cheeses can be found in these varieties.



### Dairy products

Dairy foods vary in fat and calorie content. Choose 1% or skim milk and low-fat or nonfat yogurt to decrease calories and fat. Choose part-skim or lower-fat cheeses, such as string cheese, 2% milk cheeses, mozzarella, ricotta and cottage cheese. Dairy foods also vary in carbohydrate content.

Always check the nutrition facts label for the total grams of carbohydrates per serving.

### Nuts and oils

Heart healthy fats, such as omega-3 fatty acids and monounsaturated fat, can be found in several types of nuts and oils. Omega-3 fatty acids are found in walnuts, canola oil, flaxseeds and the oil of fish such as salmon. Almonds and olive oil are good sources of monounsaturated fat. But watch your portion sizes—nuts and oils are high in calories.



## Grains

Look for the terms whole grain and 100% whole wheat—one of these should be the first ingredient listed. The terms 9-grain, 100% stone-ground and wheat bread do NOT mean that the breads were made with whole grains. Whole grains are packed with antioxidants, vitamins, minerals and fiber. A serving of bread should have 2 to 4 grams of fiber and the same amount of sodium as calories (such as 120 calories and 120 mg of sodium per slice).

### Rice, pasta, oats, barley and quinoa

Whole grains are better for your health than processed grains because they have more vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients. Whole grains such as oats and barley are high in soluble fiber, which can help lower cholesterol and reduce your risk of heart disease. A 1/2 cup serving of oats, grits, kasha, bulgur and quinoa or a 1/3 cup serving of whole-wheat couscous, millet, whole-wheat pasta or brown rice provides 15 grams of carbohydrates. The serving size is measured after cooking.

### Cereals: hot and cold

The best choices are whole-grain, high-fiber cereals with no added sugar or salt. Cereals contain a lot of carbohydrates. Carefully measure portions using measuring cups and/or a kitchen scale for best results. The best cold cereals have 4 to 5 grams of fiber, less than 3 grams of total fat and less than 140 mg of sodium per serving. One of the best hot cereals is old-fashioned rolled oats. This whole-grain, unprocessed, high-fiber cereal can be cooked in most microwaves in fewer than 5 minutes.

### Canned goods

Canned fruits and vegetables can be part of a healthy diet. Their nutritional content is similar to fresh and frozen foods. However, choose varieties that state no added salt or no added sugar on the label. Avoid canned foods in sauces or syrups.

## Frozen foods

Healthy frozen foods include vegetables, fish, poultry and unsweetened fruits. Avoid choices with sauces, oils or butters and those that are breaded or battered. Dinner kits with vegetables, a starch (such as potatoes, rice or pasta) and a sauce can be modified. Use only 1/4 to 1/3 of the sauce, and add more vegetables.

Frozen meals are often high in saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium. Choose frozen meals carefully. "Healthier" or "diet" brands are usually a better fit for your healthy eating plan.

Read the nutrition facts label and choose dinners with less than 700 mg of sodium per meal.

People with diabetes should consume less than 2,300 mg of sodium per day. People with heart problems may be instructed to consume less.



## Checkout

The variety of candy, snacks and soft drinks available at the checkout aisle can challenge a successful shopping trip.

Consider reading a magazine as you wait. This will keep you busy until it's your turn to pay for and bag your groceries.

## Wrapping it up

Whether you are trying to maintain good glucose control or to lose weight, eating a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins and low-fat dairy products can help you achieve your goal. It all starts with the foods you choose to place in your cart.