

# General Nutrition Instructions

For Diabetes In Pregnancy (called Gestational Diabetes)

## How should I eat now?

### Meals and Snacks (see sample menu – last page)

- Eat 3 small meals and 2-3 snacks per day. Also, try to eat your meals at the same time everyday. This will help control your blood sugar.
- Leave 2-3 hours between meals and snacks.
- Breakfast is an important meal of the day.
  - Eat breakfast!
  - Do not eat cold cereal or drink more than 4 oz. of milk at breakfast; these choices make your blood sugars rise
  - Eat cooked oatmeal, or eggs and toast, cottage cheese and toast
  - Do not eat fruit at breakfast.
- You can eat fruit at lunch and dinner times.
- Do not eat foods with added sugar such as:

Cakes	Candy	Chocolate Milk
Cold Cereal	Cookies	Hot Chocolate
Jell-O (regular)	Pies	Soda (regular)

\*\*sugar free Jell-O and diet soda are O.K.



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### Variety of Foods

- Eat a food from each food group in each meal: protein foods, fruits (except at breakfast), vegetables, milk, bread and starches.
- Eat more cooked or raw vegetables and salads.



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### Fiber

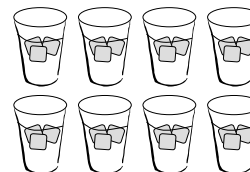
- Eat foods high in fiber such as whole grains, dry beans, fresh fruit (except at breakfast) and raw vegetables.



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### Water

- Drink 8 glasses of water everyday. Fill a large pitcher with this amount when you wake up each day. By bedtime, the pitcher should be empty.



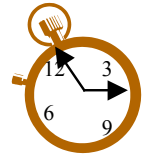
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### Milk and Fruit

- Choose non-fat or 1% milk.
- Limit milk at each meal to a 1/2 cup or 1 cup serving. This is 4 ounces to 8 ounces in a measuring cup. It is best to measure at first. Many glasses are actually more than 1 cup.
- Do not drink fruit juice. Eat fresh fruit instead.
  - Eat fruit with lunch or dinner.
  - Do not eat fruit at breakfast.

## Walking

- Ask your doctor if walking is O.K. for you before you start.
- Walk at least 20 minutes or more each day to help keep your blood sugars normal.
- The best time to walk is after a meal.
- Walking will also help you not gain too much weight.
- If you begin to have contractions (feel cramping), stop exercising and call your doctor.



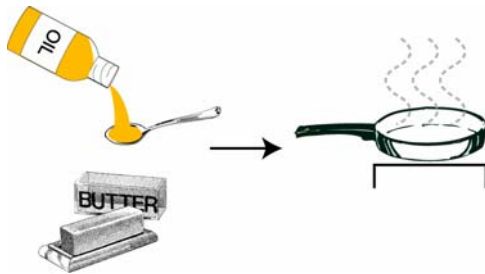
## Avoid

- Do not Drink or Smoke!!!
- Drinking alcohol or smoking will be harmful to your baby.



## Low Fat Cooking

- Do not add fat to your meals or use it in your cooking.
- Steam, bake, broil, or BBQ, rather than frying food.



These instructions are meant to keep your blood sugars as close to normal as possible. This will help you have a healthy baby. To review, remember...

- Eat 3 meals and 3 snacks at scheduled times.
- Eat balanced meals and snacks (food from different groups such as protein, grains and vegetables at each meal and snack).
- Walk after each meal if possible. Ask your doctor to make that this is O.K. for you.
- **Avoid simple sugars such as cakes, cookies, candy, regular soda and fruit juices** since these foods raise your blood sugars too much.



Women with gestational diabetes can control their blood sugars and have a healthy baby.

## Food Groups and serving sizes

The list below shows you some types of foods with the serving sizes to choose in planning your meals and snacks.

### Breads, Cereals, Starches:

### 1 Serving Equals:

Whole grain breads

1 slice

Cooked non-instant cereal such as oatmeal or Cream of Wheat

½ cup



Plain pasta or noodles

½ cup

Steamed rice (brown, white, wild)

1/3 cup

Corn, peas, cooked dry beans

½ cup

White potato

1 small or ½ cup mashed

Flour or corn tortilla

1-6 inch

Low-fat crackers

6 squares

### Fruits (Eat fruit with your lunch or dinner)

### 1 Serving Equals:

Small apple, orange or peach

1

Very small banana

1 or ½ medium size banana

Cantaloupe

1/3 medium

Grapes

17

Papaya, mango or watermelon

1 cup cubed



**No juices are recommended during pregnancy with diabetes.**

### Vegetables

### 1 Serving Equals:

Chopped raw or cooked vegetables

½ cup

Leafy vegetables

1 cup



**Note: Starchy vegetables are on the first list “Starches” and appear as a starch on the sample menu. Starchy vegetables increase blood sugars more than other vegetables.**

No limit on alfalfa sprouts, Chinese cabbage, cabbage, green onions, mushrooms, cucumber, parsley, celery, endive, lettuce, radishes, chicory, escarole, watercress, chile peppers, and fennel.

## Milk

Low-fat, reduced fat, or skim milk

Nonfat or low-fat yogurt, plain

Nonfat or fruit flavored yogurt,  
sweetened with Nutrasweet

## 1 Serving Equals:

1 cup

1 cup

1 cup



## Meat/ Protein

Lean beef, pork, poultry, or fish

Egg

Cottage cheese (nonfat or low-fat)

Tuna (water pack)

Dry beans – cooked pinto, lentils, etc...  
(can substitute for 1 oz. meat + 1 starch)

## 1 Serving Equals:

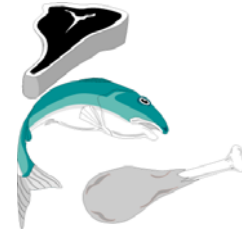
usually 2-3 ounces at lunch

1

¼ cup

¼ cup

½ cup



Cheese (low-fat, reduced fat or nonfat)

Peanut butter

1 ounce

1 tablespoon

## Fats

Margarine (soft tub or liquid)

Vegetable oil (canola, olive, peanut)

Avocado

Low-fat salad dressing

Salad dressing (regular)

Mayonnaise (regular)  
(nonfat or low-fat)

Cream cheese (low-fat or fat free)

## 1 Serving Equals:

1 tablespoon

1 teaspoon

1/8 of whole

2 tablespoons

1 tablespoon

1 teaspoon

1 tablespoon

2 tablespoons



**This list is not intended to include all choices for each food group. It serves to give you an idea about the serving size of some common foods.**

### Free foods

- A free food is any food or drink that contains less than 20 calories per serving.
- You may eat as much as you want of foods listed below:

#### Drinks

Bouillon – without fat, low sodium  
Carbonated water, plain  
Club soda  
Sugar-free sodas  
Lemon or lime juice

#### Condiments

Dill pickles  
Vinegar  
Mustard  
Horseradish

- You may eat 2 or 3 servings per day of foods listed below: Be sure to eat them at different times of the day.

#### Drinks

Cocoa powder, unsweetened (1 tablespoon)  
Coffee or tea (1 cup/day or less)

#### Condiments

Catsup (1 tablespoon)  
Taco sauce (1 tablespoon)  
Salad dressing (low calorie, 2 tablespoon)

### What about sugar substitutes? Are these O.K.?

In pregnancy, Aspartame (Equal and Nutrasweet) and Acesulfame – K (Sweet One and Swiss Sweet) are O.K. to use. It is best to **limit these to 2 servings or less daily. Do not use saccharin products** (Sweet and Low, Sugar Twin and Sweet Crystals). Check label if you don't know what is in an item.

### What about wanting something sweet?

If you have a craving for something sweet, try one of the following:

- Jell-O (or other Gelatin) sugar-free
- Gum, sugar-free
- Jelly/ Jam, sugar-free
- Pancake syrup, sugar-free
- Carbonated sodas, sugar-free

### Check labels for hidden sugars!

You might be surprised at how many foods have sugar added. Simple sugars can cause a large rise in your sugar levels and should be avoided. Check food labels.

Do not eat foods if they contain any of any the following:

Sugar	Dextrose	Brown sugar
Fructose	Powdered sugar	Galactose
Corn syrup	Glucose	Corn sweeteners
Levulose	Honey	Maltose
Molasses	Sucrose	Modified food starch

**The following foods contain simple sugars and should be avoided:**

- Barbecue sauce
- Desserts (cakes, pies, pudding, ice cream, sherbet, sorbet, frozen yogurt, ice cream bars)
- Canned fruits (except unsweetened applesauce)
- Chewing gum (except sugar-free)
- Cottage cheese with fruit
- Jelly, jams (except sugar-free)
- Sodas/sweetened beverages (except sugar-free)
- Soda waters flavored with fruit juices
- Soups (canned or instant) – avoid modified food starch (especially in cream soups)
- Spaghetti sauce (except no added sugars or sweeteners)
- Tartar sauce
- Teriyaki sauce/ Worcestershire sauce

# Guide to Serving Sizes and Portions

1 oz. of Meat 1/8th inch thick  
(example: luncheon meat)

1 oz. of Meat 1/4th inch thick  
(example: turkey breast or  
roast beef)

3 oz. of Meat 1/2th inch thick  
(example: lean round steak)

## PORTION ESTIMATES



Palm of your hand is about a 3 oz. serving



Fist on the table is about 8 oz. (1 cup)



Cupped palm is about 4 oz. (1/2 cup)



2 Tablespoons is 1 oz.



## Sample Menu

Time	Meat Plan # of Choices	Food Choices	Menu Ideas	Menu Ideas
Meal 8:00 A.M.	½ cup 1-2 oz. optional none 1 1	Milk Protein Vegetables Fruits Starch/grain Fat	½ cup nonfat or low-fat milk 1-2 eggs ½ cup vegetable juice  ½ cup oatmeal 1 teaspoon vegetable oil	
Snack 10:30 A.M.	1 1 oz.	Starch Protein	1 slice of wheat bread 1 oz. string cheese	
Meal 12:00 P.M.	½ - 1 cup 2-3 oz. 1-2 1 1-2 1	Milk Protein Vegetables Fruit Starch Fat	½ - 1 cup nonfat or low-fat milk 2-3 oz. turkey Lettuce, tomato, carrot sticks 1 small orange 1-2 pieces of wheat bread 1 tablespoon fat-free mayonnaise	
Snack 3:00 P.M.	1 1 oz. 1	Starch Protein Fruit	6 saltine crackers ¼ cup water-pack tuna 1 small apple	
Meal 6:00 P.M.	½ - 1 cup 2-3 oz. 1-2 1 1-2 1	Milk Protein Vegetables Fruit Starch Fat	½ - 1 cup no sugar added yogurt 2-3 oz. lean ground beef, cooked ½ - 1 cup cooked broccoli 1 small nectarine 1/3 - 2/3 cup rice 1 teaspoon of margarine	
Snack	½ cup 1 1 oz.	Milk Starch Protein	½ cup nonfat or low-fat milk 1 corn tortilla 1 oz. Cheese	

These general nutritional guidelines have been adapted from the Sweet Success Program patient education resources.