

For many people, eating foods prepared away from home is a way of life. Whether at restaurants, take-out counters, vending machines or corner stores, making healthy choices is possible and important. Balancing healthy food with regular physical activity can help prevent or delay the onset of diabetes or its complications.

Here are some tips to help you enjoy healthy foods and meals wherever you are. A registered dietitian can help you include your favourite foods in a personalized meal plan.

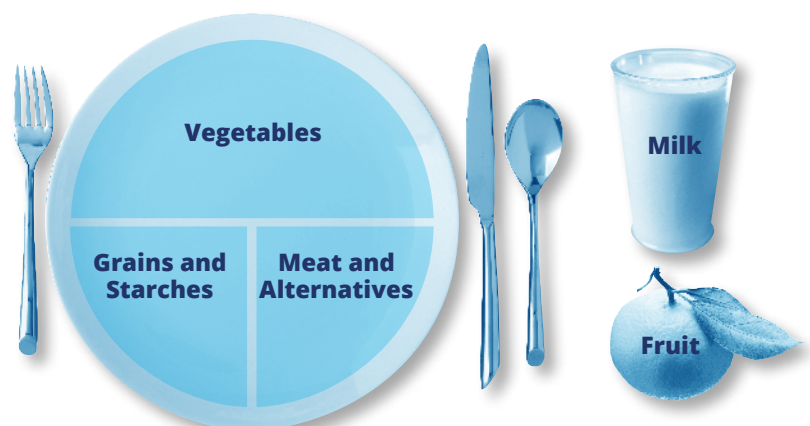


## Consider these healthy eating tips

When planning a meal or snack, make healthy choices based on *Canada's Food Guide*. *Canada's Food Guide* describes how much food you need and what type of food is part of healthy eating.

Choose foods that provide:	Choose foods lower in:
<p><b>Fibre</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• slows the rise in blood sugar, helps improve cholesterol levels and helps you feel full</li> <li>• choose vegetables, fruits, beans, lentils, whole grains</li> </ul> <p><b>Vitamins &amp; minerals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• help keep the body healthy and fight infection</li> <li>• choose brightly coloured vegetables over french fries, milk over pop, whole grain over white bread</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fat</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides extra calories; saturated and trans fats increase your risk of heart disease</li> <li>• limit fast food, baked goods, fatty meats, cream</li> </ul> <p><b>Sodium (salt)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• can lead to high blood pressure</li> <li>• limit fast food, canned/dried soups, salty snacks, prepared frozen dinners</li> </ul> <p><b>Sugar</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides extra calories; may make control of blood sugar and blood fats difficult</li> <li>• limit regular pop, fruit drinks, candies, desserts</li> </ul>

## The Plate Method can be your guide when eating away from home



## Overcome the challenges of making healthy food choices away from home

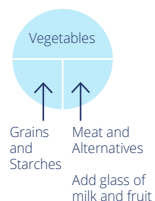
Challenges I have faced	Possible solutions
<input type="checkbox"/> Limited choices are available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring healthy food from home such as sandwiches, nuts, washed, pre-cut vegetables and fruit</li> <li>• Check out all options before making your choice</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> Portions are too big	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think about portion size before making your choice (avoid “super-sizing”)</li> <li>• Order half portions or share an item with a friend</li> <li>• Stop eating when you are full; take extra food home</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> It is easy to eat “mindlessly” (nibbling while waiting or eating after I’m full)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid skipping meals or snacks</li> <li>• Drink water to avoid nibbling</li> <li>• Skip or share appetizers or snacks</li> <li>• Ask for a take home container when ordering</li> <li>• Move tempting foods away or place napkin over unwanted food</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> Unhealthy cooking and serving methods are used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask to have your choice prepared differently (e.g. baked instead of fried)</li> <li>• Ask for sauces on the side and use sparingly</li> <li>• Ask for substitutions such as salad vs. fries; milk vs. cream</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> “All-you-can-eat” buffets are tempting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scan the buffet before making choices</li> <li>• Go through the buffet line only once</li> <li>• Take smaller portions of each item</li> <li>• Order from the menu instead of going to the buffet</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> I enjoy the taste of less healthy choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make changes one small step at a time</li> <li>• Be patient and allow time for your taste buds to change</li> <li>• Try new healthy foods to find ones you enjoy</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> I want to treat myself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balance the choice that you feel is less healthy with a healthier choice (e.g. fried chicken with baked potato instead of french fries)</li> <li>• Choose smaller portions or share less healthy choices</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> My family/friends often make less healthy food choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be a healthy role model, set a positive example</li> <li>• Discuss and choose a location that offers healthy options</li> </ul>
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## Make healthy choices

Here are some tips to help you make wise food choices wherever you are. Remember that portion size is an important part of healthy choices.

	Choose <b>MORE</b> often	Choose <b>LESS</b> often
<b>Cooking methods</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Baked, steamed, poached, grilled, roasted or stir-fried</li> <li>Tomato-based sauce, sauces on the side</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fried, breaded, battered</li> <li>Au gratin (with cheese), sweet or creamy sauces</li> <li>Dishes with soy sauce or MSG</li> </ul>
<b>Snacks on-the-go</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vegetables, fruit, low-fat cheeses or yogourt, boiled eggs</li> <li>Whole-grain crackers with peanut butter</li> <li>Unsalted nuts or seeds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cheese puffs, chips, cookies, donuts, buttered/salted popcorn, chocolate bars, candy</li> </ul>
<b>Beverages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water, milk (skim, 1%)</li> <li>Sugar-free/diet drinks</li> <li>Clear tea, herbal tea, black coffee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Milkshakes, fruit drinks, regular pop</li> <li>Alcohol, specialty drinks (e.g. iced cappuccino)</li> </ul>
<b>Fast food</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Garden salad</li> <li>Mini subs, pita sandwiches, plain burgers/wraps/sandwiches (ask for extra vegetables)</li> <li>Vegetarian or cheese pizza with whole-grain crust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Burgers/sandwiches with bacon, cheese and high-fat sauces</li> <li>French fries, fried chicken, fried fish, poutine, hash browns</li> <li>Pizza with pepperoni, sausage, bacon or extra cheese</li> </ul>
<b>Starters</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raw vegetables, salads (garden, spinach, fruit)</li> <li>Vegetable juice, clear or vegetable soups</li> <li>Seafood cocktail, sushi</li> <li>Whole-grain breads and rolls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Salads with high-fat dressings or toppings</li> <li>Cream soups</li> <li>Wings, egg rolls, onion rings, nachos</li> <li>White or garlic bread</li> </ul>
<b>Main courses</b>	<b>Grains &amp; Starches (amount equal to ¼ of your plate)</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oatmeal, high-fibre/lower-sugar cereals</li> <li>Whole-grain breads, rice, pasta, barley, couscous</li> <li>Plain or sweet potatoes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sugary, low-fibre cereals</li> <li>Large bagels, muffins, croissants, white bread</li> <li>French fries, hash browns, fried rice</li> </ul>
	<b>Meat &amp; Alternatives (amount equal to ¼ of your plate)</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lean meats, poultry, fish, eggs, low-fat cheese</li> <li>Tofu, soy products, vegetable protein</li> <li>Legumes (e.g. lentils, chickpeas, beans)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High-salt and/or high-fat meats (e.g. ribs, wings, sausages, wieners, poultry with skin on, processed luncheon meats)</li> </ul>
<b>Vegetables (amount equal to ½ of your plate)</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Salads (Greek, garden, spinach), plain vegetables</li> <li>Vegetables on sandwiches, wraps, pizza</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Salads with creamy, high-fat dressings and toppings like bacon bits, croutons, cheese</li> </ul>
<b>Desserts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fresh fruit, frozen yogourt, skim milk latte</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cakes, pies, pastries, ice cream, cheesecake</li> </ul>

### PLATE METHOD



## Plan ahead to manage your diabetes

People with diabetes can also use their meal plan to make good choices. The 'General tips' table provides some information for people taking insulin. If you take certain pills to manage your diabetes, these tips may also apply. Talk to your health-care professional for more information.



	General tips
<b>Type of food or beverage</b>	<p>If you adjust your insulin, you need to know how much carbohydrate is in your meal or snack. You can check:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the label on pre-packaged foods</li><li>• <i>Beyond the Basics</i> resources</li><li>• nutrition information (restaurants, websites, pamphlets)</li></ul> <p>Know how alcohol can affect your diabetes and plan for this. For more information, refer to <i>Alcohol and Diabetes</i></p>
<b>Portions</b>	<p>Learn to estimate portion sizes. If the serving size is larger or smaller than your usual portion, you will need to adjust either the portion size or your insulin to keep your blood sugar level stable.</p>
<b>Timing</b>	<p>If your meal will be earlier or later than usual, you may need to adjust your insulin or change the timing of a snack to avoid having a high or low blood sugar level.</p> <p>Avoid skipping meals or snacks.</p>

### Special tips for me

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### THE BOTTOM LINE

When combined with regular physical activity, making healthy choices while eating away from home can help you to prevent, delay or manage diabetes. For more individualized information on healthy food choices, solutions to challenges and/or tips to manage your diabetes, talk to your diabetes educator or health-care professional. Bon appétit! Enjoy!

**Related articles:** *Beyond the basics, Alcohol and diabetes, and Handy Portion Guide*

**DIABETES  
CANADA**

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Diabetes Canada is making the invisible epidemic of diabetes visible and urgent. Eleven million Canadians have diabetes or prediabetes. Now is the time to End Diabetes - its health impacts as well as the blame, shame and misinformation associated with it. Diabetes Canada partners with Canadians to End Diabetes through education and support services, resources for health-care professionals, advocacy to governments, schools and workplaces, and, funding research to improve treatments and find a cure.

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