



Food & Insulin




Foods that contain starch and sugar are collectively called carbohydrates. When digested, these foods are broken down to glucose (sugar) and absorbed into the bloodstream. Carbohydrates are important as they provide our bodies with energy needed to function. For people with diabetes, eating large amounts of these foods will increase blood sugar levels because there is not enough insulin working in your body.

Carbohydrate = foods needing insulin <i>These foods will raise blood glucose (sugar) levels</i>			
Starchy foods	These foods often form the basis of meals; Potatoes, chips, rice, breakfast cereals, bread, chapattis, noodles, pasta	These usually raise your blood sugar levels slowly	
Liquid dairy	These foods contain a milk sugar called lactose; Milk, yoghurts, ice cream	These usually raise your blood sugar levels quite slowly	
Fruit	Whether dried or fresh, fruit is naturally sweet; Apple, orange, raisins, strawberries, mango	These usually raise your blood sugar levels quite slowly	
Snack foods	These are often high in sugar and fat; Crisps, chocolate, biscuits, pasties, sausage rolls	These will raise your blood sugar levels – possibly very quickly	
Sugary foods	Food and drink with large amounts of sugar / added sugar including; Sugar, honey, sugary drinks, sweets, ordinary fizzy pop, fruit juices	These will raise your blood sugar levels very quickly & are best saved for treating hypos	

Eating and drinking provides energy which is used to perform everyday activities such as breathing and walking; any energy not used is stored as fat. With more fat stores, the less effective your insulin and/or any diabetes medications becomes resulting in higher blood sugar levels. Being overweight also increases your risk of complications from diabetes including heart disease and stroke.



Although fat & protein foods do not raise blood glucose significantly, having large amounts (particularly of fat) can lead to weight gain. Eating as little fat as possible and choosing healthier fats will help in managing weight and risk of complications.

Foods NOT needing insulin <i>- These foods do not significantly affect blood glucose (sugar) levels</i> <i>Although these foods contain some carbohydrate, they DO NOT normally need insulin</i>		
Protein foods	Any meat, chicken or fish WITHOUT a coating and eggs, cheese, nuts, lentils, beans	
Vegetables	Any vegetables (except potatoes) whether fresh, frozen or tinned including sweetcorn, peas, tomatoes, peppers	
Fats & spreads	Any cheese spread, meat paste / pate, butter, margarines, oils	

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