

# Healthy Eating Tips For Diabetes, High Blood Pressure, High Cholesterol, Overweight

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- ❖ **Eat breakfast.** You need protein and calories early in the day, so you are not starving later. You will burn the calories you eat in the morning more efficiently than calories you eat in the evening. Try skim milk or yogurt, a piece of fruit, whole grain cereal.
- ❖ **Eat your vegetables:** 4 or 5 servings (about 2.5 cups) of fresh or frozen vegetables a day. Eat a variety of green, red and yellow foods. Eat a serving of vegetables with lunch. “Starchy” vegetables like lima beans, peas, and corn have more calories per serving than greens, green beans, peppers and carrots.
- ❖ **Fruits:** 4 or 5 servings of fruit (.5 cup each). Eat fresh, frozen or canned fruit with no added sugar. Fruit juices are a concentrated source of calories: it takes 3 apples to make 4 ounces of juice! Read labels and count calories to learn more.
- ❖ **Grains and grain products:** try whole grain bread, cereals and pasta. Limit white flour products when possible. This is an excellent way to cut “empty” calories.
- ❖ **Minimize white potatoes,** replace with sweet potatoes and/or winter squash, which are much more nutritious and still filling. French fries are the worst!
- ❖ **Diary:** 2-3 servings of nonfat or 1% milk, yogurt or cheese. Buy frozen nonfat yogurt instead of ice cream.
- ❖ **Meat, poultry, fish:** no more than 2 servings (6 ounces total) a day of lean meat, skinless poultry or fish. Tuna and salmon are good sources of healthy omega-3 fatty acids. Broil, roast or grill but do not fry!
- ❖ **Nuts, seeds and beans:** 1 serving a day of lightly salted or unsalted nuts (1/3 cup), sunflower seeds or natural peanut butters (2 Tbsp), or cooked beans (.5 cup).
- ❖ **Fats, oils, dressings:** 2-3 servings a day. Use olive oil and canola oil for cooking. A serving is 1 tsp margarine or mayonnaise, 1 Tbsp low fat mayonnaise or regular salad dressing, 2 Tbsp light salad dressing. Fats from plant sources (vegetable oils, nuts, avocado) are better for us than animal fats. High fat foods tend to raise blood pressure and cholesterol. Fat-free salad dressings are usually loaded with sugar.
- ❖ **Sweets:** Diabetics must avoid concentrated sweets (jam, jelly, candy, frosting, syrup). Artificially sweetened cookies still have carbohydrates and may raise blood sugar. Try to satisfy your sweet tooth with fruits and lightly sweetened desserts, no more than once a day.
- ❖ **Salt:** 2,000 mg a day is not harmful for most people, unless high blood pressure is very hard to control. Look at labels! Processed foods are very high in sodium. Even apparently, healthy items like vegetable juice may have as much as 1,500 mg per serving. Use less salt in cooking and substitute other herbs and spices for flavor. Do not add salt at the table. Avoid salty, high fat snacks like chips and dip.
- ❖ **Drinks:** avoid sweet tea, coffee, soft drinks, and also “juice drinks” that have a lot of sugar or corn syrup and very little juice. These are very high calorie items.
- ❖ **EXERCISE AT LEAST 30 MINUTES, 5 DAYS A WEEK.** Walk, use a treadmill or exercise bike, swim or do water aerobics...whatever you enjoy and will stick with.