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GUIDE

# DIABETES toolkit

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YOUR COMPLETE  
GUIDE TO LIVING WITH  
**TYPE 2 DIABETES**

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**E-BOOK**



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YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO  
LIVING WITH TYPE 2 DIABETES

## Just diagnosed? Start here!

A diagnosis of type 2 diabetes can be confusing, upsetting and a bit overwhelming. You probably have lots of questions: How did I get it? What does it mean? What do I do now? This Diabetes Toolkit is your starting point and go-to resource.

### What is type 2 diabetes?

Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes. It starts with a problem called insulin resistance. This is where the body doesn't respond properly to a hormone called insulin that helps keep your blood sugar level balanced. With type 2 diabetes, the body either doesn't produce enough insulin or the cells don't detect it. Inability to use insulin properly means glucose (the simplest form of sugar) doesn't get absorbed into cells where it is needed for energy, but stays in the blood. So, blood sugar levels rise, eventually developing into pre-diabetes, and then into type 2 diabetes.

For most people, this is a gradual progression over many years but, unfortunately, it is often not diagnosed until the later stages, when blood sugar levels have already been elevated for some time.

### Who gets type 2 diabetes?

Typically, type 2 diabetes develops after the ages of 30 to 40 years. Carrying extra weight, particularly around the middle, is a significant risk factor for type 2 diabetes, but genetics also play a big part. This means some people who are carrying extra weight won't develop

diabetes, while others, who are thin, might. Having high blood pressure is another risk factor and belonging to Maori, Pacifica, Middle Eastern or Asian ethnicities increases your likelihood. It's the interaction between our genes and our lifestyle that influences the development of type 2 diabetes. Those who are genetically at risk don't fare well with our Western lifestyle.

### Why is type 2 diabetes a problem?

The main problem with diabetes is the damage to blood vessels that occurs when your blood sugar levels remain high for long periods of time. This can lead to heart disease, kidney disease, eye damage and circulation problems.

With lifestyle changes and the addition of medication, when needed, the risk of developing these complications can be avoided or significantly reduced. Early diagnosis and maintaining good control of blood sugar levels, cholesterol and blood pressure is the key.

### Can you have 'mild' diabetes?

Some people with type 2 diabetes, who are not taking medication, think of their diabetes as 'mild' or less serious but,

unfortunately, this is not really the case. The reality is, if blood sugar levels aren't kept on track and the body is buffeted by persistently high levels, then complications develop.

We also know type 2 diabetes is a progressive illness so, over time, people usually progress to needing tablets and then insulin.

Taking diabetes seriously from the start, including putting the right lifestyle changes in place and adding medication, when needed, will help to slow the progression and reduce the chances of developing complications.

### Did you know?

For every person diagnosed, it's estimated there's another unaware they have diabetes. For people with pre-diabetes, Changes to diet and exercise can reduce their risk of developing diabetes by 60 per cent.

# Diabetes basics: What you need to know

## What is insulin?

Located behind the stomach, the pancreas is an organ that has two different functions: it produces pancreatic juice, used in digestion in the small intestine, and it produces a number of hormones, one of which is insulin.

One of insulin's roles is to reduce blood glucose. After a meal containing carbohydrate, insulin is released into the blood to help transport glucose from the bloodstream into other cells where it can be used or stored as energy. Between meals, the liver releases glucose with the aim of keeping blood glucose at a desirable level. Insulin is used to signal the liver to stop production when the level is high enough. If the body is unable to produce enough insulin, or it becomes resistant to the insulin produced, blood glucose levels can get out of control.

## What is the difference between type 1 and type 2 diabetes?

**These are two very different types of diabetes.**

- **Type 1** accounts for less than 10 per cent of diabetes and is where insulin-producing cells in the pancreas are destroyed, so the pancreas does not produce any (or only very little) insulin. It is commonly diagnosed in children but can occur at any age, and people with type 1 diabetes will need insulin injections for life, as it is a lifelong condition.
- **Type 2** is much more common and accounts for nearly 90 per cent of all diabetes. We are presently experiencing a huge increase in cases. In type 2 diabetes, insulin production becomes inadequate or body cells become resistant to insulin, or both. Contributing factors include being overweight, having

a family history of type 2 diabetes, having a sedentary lifestyle and increasing age. It is treated, initially, with healthy eating and exercise. Medications may be needed if blood glucose levels cannot be kept within the normal range.

## Can you reverse type 2 diabetes?

Type 2 diabetes cannot be reversed but the right diet, exercise and weight loss can make blood glucose control easier. In fact, in over 50 per cent of people, blood glucose levels can be normalised by:

- following a kilojoule-controlled diet
- increasing physical activity
- losing some weight.

## What about pre-diabetes?

Pre-diabetes is a condition where cells in the body are becoming insulin resistant and blood glucose levels are higher than they should be, but are not high enough to be classified as diabetes. For those diagnosed with pre-diabetes, taking steps to improve insulin resistance, such as eating a healthy and balanced diet, losing weight and participating in regular physical activity, may be enough to avoid ever being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes.

## I have recently been diagnosed - will it get worse and will I have to inject myself with insulin?

Type 2 diabetes is a progressive disease. As you get older there is a probability you will eventually have to take medication to control your blood glucose and you may eventually require insulin injections.

The good news is that keeping well, good glucose control and a healthy lifestyle have proven to be effective in delaying this progression.

## What's the link with being overweight?

There are many risk factors for diabetes. Being overweight is just one of them. If you are overweight, losing weight will ensure your diabetes is better managed and will have many other beneficial effects on your health including reducing your risk of heart disease.

## What will happen if I don't start controlling my diabetes?

Unfortunately, one of the major problems with diabetes is that after a period of time, if blood glucose levels are not well controlled, it causes damage to the body's blood vessels, in particular, the large blood vessels of the heart, brain and legs and the very tiny blood vessels and capillaries that supply the eyes, kidneys and nerves.

This damage leads to the classic complications of diabetes, including poor blood circulation and numbness of feet, high risk of heart disease and kidney failure, all of which need to be carefully managed.

## What is hypoglycaemia?

This is when blood glucose falls below the normal level. It can occur when people are on medication or insulin to reduce blood glucose. There are several warning signs including feeling dizzy, faint or sweating.

Treatment is by taking some form of fast-acting sugar, eg, glucose tablets, which raises the blood glucose levels rapidly. This should be followed by a sandwich or meal to ensure the level doesn't drop. It is important to take note of the cause of each episode, so you can avoid it happening again.

## Diabetes basics: What to do

Diabetes is a serious disease, and it's important to take it seriously. People with type 2 diabetes are two to four times more likely to develop cardiovascular disease than people who don't have the disease, and they are more than twice as likely to have a heart attack or stroke.

But it's not all doom and gloom. Controlling blood glucose levels and maintaining a healthy lifestyle can significantly reduce the complications associated with type 2 diabetes. Research shows you don't have to be a saint to make a difference to your health, either.

It's important to keep up with your doctor's appointments and make sure you have the tests your doctor recommends. These tests are to monitor diabetes control and detect any complications:

**HbA1c (a measure of your average glucose levels over the past two to three months):** Have this test every three to six months. Generally, people with diabetes should aim for an HbA1c below 53mmol/mol (or 7 per cent), but discuss this with your doctor.

**Blood fats (including cholesterol and triglyceride levels):** Have this test at least yearly, or more often if you are outside the target range. If LDL ('bad') cholesterol levels are greater than 2mmol/L and/or triglyceride levels are greater than 1.7mmol/L following lifestyle changes, medication may be needed.

**Blood pressure:** Have this test every time you visit your doctor. A blood pressure reading of greater than 130/80 (or 125/75 if you have proteinuria - protein in the urine) indicates the need for medication.

**Kidney function:** Have this test annually. A simple urine test looks for very small amounts of protein leaking into the urine - a sign the kidneys are not working properly.

**Eye examination:** Have this test soon after a type 2 diabetes diagnosis and within five years of diagnosis for type 1 diabetes, then every one to two years, or more frequently if problems are found. Speak to your optometrist or ophthalmologist.

**Feet examination:** Have this test once per year, to check for any circulation or nerve problems, which could contribute to ulcers. If problems are detected, regular check-ups with a podiatrist are recommended. It is also important to check your feet daily at home.

## What can I eat with type 2 diabetes?

One of the first questions that comes with a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes is: "What can I (or my family member) eat now?"

The answer doesn't have to be complicated.

**Here are some tips to get you started.**

### Think ahead

Plan what you and your family are going to eat for the week so it includes healthy meals the whole family will enjoy.

**Use the 'ideal plate'**  
Make sure a quarter of your dinner plate is protein, a quarter is carbohydrate and half your plate is non-starchy vegetables.

**Eat the same food**  
People with type 2 diabetes don't need to buy special foods or eat separate meals from the rest of the family. There are lots of healthy, recipes the whole family will enjoy (see recipe section, page 13).

**Make healthy choices the easy choices**  
Decide as a family not to have unhealthy food in the house. This is hard at first, but will ultimately benefit everyone.

# Step-by-step: Building a healthy diabetes-friendly meal

You can make almost any meal - including pizza, pasta and lasagne - diabetes friendly.  
Just portion your ingredients following the lists below and away you go!

## 1 Give vegetables a leading role

There needs to be at least two (ideally three) serves of vegetables in your meal. One serve of vegetables is equivalent to half a cup of cooked vegetables or 1 cup of salad (not including starchy vegetables such as potato or kumara).

To reach your per meal vegetable quota, add lots of grated vegetables to sauces, soups and baked dishes, dish up your meal with a generous serve of steamed green vegetables or make veges the 'star' of all your meals rather than a side dish.

### Per person

1 cup\* cooked non-starchy vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower, carrot, etc  
2 cups\* salad such as lettuce, spinach, tomato, capsicum, etc

\* These quantities are the minimum to aim for - feel free to load up your plate.

## 3 Choose moderate amounts of carbohydrates

Some carbohydrate food are broken down fast and quickly release glucose into the blood. These are high glycaemic index carbohydrates. Keep the glycaemic load of your meal down by choosing smaller portions of starchy vegetables. Using low to moderate-GI carbohydrate foods will help keep the overall GI of the meal low. Choose pasta, noodles, basmati rice, pearl barley, quinoa, grainy breads and legumes.

Don't forget that legumes contain low-GI carbohydrates as well as protein (see protein above), so be mindful of that when you're creating your meal.

### Per person

1 cup cooked pasta or noodles, preferably wholemeal  
1 small wholegrain bread roll  
2 slices wholegrain bread  
1 cup cooked couscous  
¾ cup cooked brown rice or basmati rice  
¾ cup quinoa  
1 cooked small potato  
1 cooked medium kumara  
1 medium corn cob

### What a healthy plate looks like

Before dishing up your meal, mentally divide your plate into quarters. One quarter should contain protein foods, another quarter should contain low to medium-GI carbohydrate foods and the rest of your plate (the final half) should be filled with vegetables and/or salad. This will help you get the right balance to your meal and help with portion sizes. Remember, smaller plates make smaller portion sizes.

## 2 Add a portion of lean protein

Protein is an important part of a diabetes-friendly meal because it helps to fill you up for longer. Proteins also help you feel full for longer. Always choose reduced-fat dairy products and lean meat and remove all visible fat prior to cooking.

### Per person

2 small (45g) eggs  
120g tofu  
½ cup cooked lentils, chickpeas or 3-bean mix  
100g cooked skinless chicken (125g raw)  
120g cooked fish (170g raw), including canned tuna, salmon and mackerel  
100g cooked lean beef, lamb or pork (125g raw)  
40g (about 2 slices) reduced-fat cheese

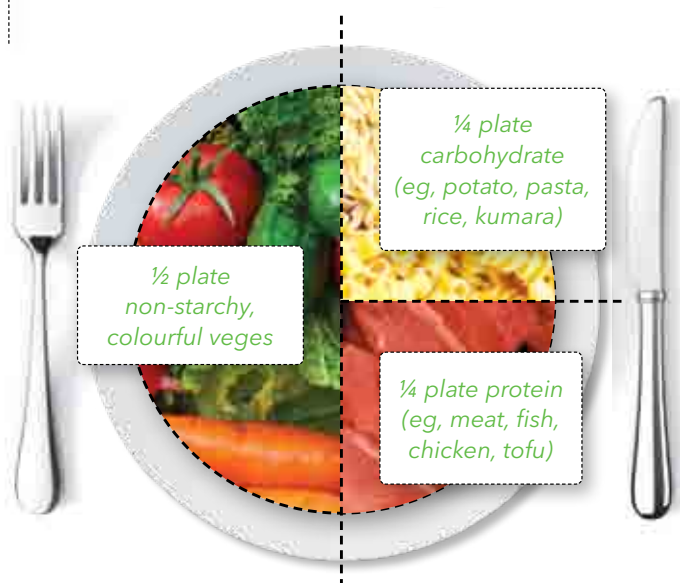
## 4 Add a little healthy fat

Like protein, healthy fats help lower the GI of the overall meal. Good fats are also important for keeping cholesterol levels in check. Aim for small quantities of healthy fats such as olive oil, avocado and nuts or seeds.

**NOTE** Adding fat is not always necessary as many sources of protein, such as meat and tofu, can provide ample fat.

### Per person

2 teaspoons pesto  
1 teaspoon plant-based oil (eg, extra virgin olive oil)  
2 teaspoons crushed or sliced nuts  
2 teaspoons avocado  
1 tablespoon hummus  
2 teaspoons salad dressing



# Cooking for someone with type 2 diabetes

## Boost the fibre

Add fibre, to help control blood sugar, by including vegetables, beans and legumes where possible (but especially in sauces, soups and salads) and choose wholegrain or wholemeal varieties of bread, cereal and pasta.

## Reduce the saturated fat

Fat contains the most energy per gram, and saturated fat affects our heart health. To help keep the overall kilojoules down, trim any visible fat from meat, remove skin from chicken, choose low or reduced-fat versions of all dairy foods and minimise total fat whenever possible.

## 'Pass' on the salt

Many people with type 2 diabetes have high blood pressure which puts them at more risk of heart problems. Too much salt can increase blood pressure. Cook with low-salt, reduced-salt or no-added-salt ingredients, especially when it comes to canned vegetables or legumes and stock. Choose foods canned in spring water rather than brine and don't add salt to the food.



## Diabetes food FAQs

### Is it true people with diabetes need to snack in between meals?

Not always. For someone who is not taking medication, snacks are not a necessity, although spreading food intake over the day can often help with managing blood glucose levels. Those who are taking insulin and diabetes medication, which can cause low blood sugar levels (hypos), may need to snack between meals

to prevent them going too low, but this will vary according to the type of medication and insulin they are taking and when they take it.

### Does too much sugar cause diabetes?

There is no evidence sugar itself causes diabetes. While diabetes does mean having too much sugar in the bloodstream, the relationship isn't that simple. Type 1 diabetes occurs as a result of the body's immune system attacking its own

insulin-producing cells, which has nothing to do with eating sugar. And, in type 2 diabetes, the hormone insulin is unable to work properly to get glucose (sugar) from the bloodstream into muscles and cells. This is worsened by carrying extra weight, being inactive and eating lots of saturated fat. Sugar, per se, doesn't cause insulin resistance – although, obviously, when eaten in excess, it can contribute to weight gain, which then increases the risk.

# Your type 2 diabetes-friendly pantry

There's no doubt that **what you have at home has a huge impact on your food choices. If your kitchen contains items that may compromise your health, a few easy changes can make a big difference. Start with your pantry and fridge.**

## ❌ Try not to keep

Foods high in kilojoules but low in useful nutrients such as: potato chips; buttery crackers (the melt-in-your-mouth variety), biscuits and cakes; anything chocolatey – yes, even cooking chocolate; confectionery; rich sauces, dressings and mayonnaise; most cheeses, cream and butter; white bread and rich breads such as croissants and brioche; white rice (with the exception of basmati); high-fat/low-fibre cereals; and ice cream.

## ✅ Keep

Foods that help you look after your health such as: high-fibre cereals (untoasted varieties with more than 7g fibre per 100g, eg, bran-based, rolled oats, untoasted muesli); dried legumes; brown and basmati rice; high-fibre breads and crackers (more than 5g fibre per 100g); canned vegetables such as sweet corn, tomatoes and beetroot; canned legumes, eg, chickpeas, lentils and chilli beans; heart-friendly oils such as olive, canola or sunflower oil; nuts and seeds; frozen vegetables and frozen lean meat, poultry and fish. Add flavour with smaller amounts of Asian sauces, eg, mirin, reduced-salt soy, oyster, sweet chilli and fish sauces.

## Pantry TOP 10

### 1 Canned legumes, eg, chickpeas, lentils, cannellini beans

Full of fibre, and inexpensive, these fill you up. Purée chickpeas or cannellini beans with garlic and lemon juice for an easy hummus, or add drained, rinsed chickpeas to soups or curries for added texture and protein.

### 2 Canned fish, eg, tuna, salmon, sardines

These fish are rich in protein and omega-3 fats and are great to pop in the lunchbox with some salad and grainy bread. Go for unflavoured varieties canned in spring water, or drain brine or oil thoroughly.

### 3 Canned tomatoes

Rich in lycopene (helps protect against prostate cancer), these can be added to almost anything. The flavoured varieties make a great sauce for meat or legumes.

### 4 Pumpkin or sunflower seeds

Dry-fried seeds add a crunchy, nutty flavour to many dishes.

### 5 Balsamic vinegar

Adds huge flavour to marinades, dressings and sauces without adding kilojoules.

### 6 Nuts and no-added-sugar nut butters

Add flavour, creaminess and crunch, along with heart-healthy fats.

### 7 Fish sauce

A fabulous flavour booster for stir-fry sauces or Asian dressings. It is, however, high in sodium, so use sparingly. Try using less than the recipe suggests or diluting with water.

### 8 Seeded mustard

Great as a spread on bread (instead of butter), in salad dressings, as a rub on lean meat or as an accompaniment to almost anything.

### 9 Dried chilli flakes

These add zing wherever they are used. Add to casseroles, sauces and soups.

### 10 Reduced-salt soy sauce

Boosts flavour without kilojoules.







## Fresh TOP 10

Fresh vegetables and fruit are top of the list when it comes to a healthy pantry. Non-starchy varieties are great for adding volume and taste to meals, 'diluting' other higher-kilojoule foods. They are also packed with nutrients to keep you well. But watch starchy vegetables such as potatoes, kumara, yams and taro. These carbohydrates make up only one-quarter of the ideal healthy plate.

**1 Salad greens** for example, baby spinach or mesclun salad mix. Kilojoule for kilojoule, greens are probably the most concentrated source of nutrition of any food. They are perfect for bulking out meals. Get into the habit of having at least one handful of greens each day.

**2 Fresh herbs** Great for adding flavour (without kilojoules). Fresh basil enhances the flavour of tomatoes and coriander goes well with almost any Asian dish.

**3 Lebanese or telegraph cucumber** Low in kilojoules, use this vege to bulk out salads, sandwiches or platters. Make an easy low-kilojoule dip by grating cucumber and adding garlic and a little salt to thick low-fat plain yoghurt.

**4 Tomatoes** Slice and enjoy with cottage cheese spread on a grainy cracker or serve with cucumber and cubes of feta as a Greek salad. Tomatoes are a good source of lycopene, an antioxidant that helps protect against prostate cancer.

**5 Bananas** Sweeten up your cereal with sliced banana. Keep a few at work or in the car for times when the munchies strike. They are one of nature's best fast foods. Bear in mind, the riper the banana the higher the sugar content.

**6 Kiwifruit** A good source of vitamin C and fibre. If you need something sweet after dinner, try sliced kiwifruit with a little yoghurt and a sprinkle of muesli.

**7 Blueberries** Blueberries contain higher antioxidant levels than almost every other vegetable or fruit. The blue colour is due to anthocyanins, antioxidants shown to be good for brain function.

**8 Chicken breasts** Skinless chicken breasts are one of the leanest forms of meat. Although expensive, a little can go a long way in a stir-fry.

**9 Tofu** Although not big on flavour, tofu takes on the flavours of food it is prepared with, and this soy bean product can be greatly satisfying. Being high in protein, it is great to use as a protein source in stir-fries.

**10 Falafel** A healthy fast food if ever there was one! Made from ground legumes, such as chickpeas and broad beans, and available ready-to-go from the deli section at the supermarket.



## Fridge and freezer TOP 10

### 1 Frozen whole baby beans

A great standby when your fresh vegetables run out. Add a handful at the last minute to bulk out curries, stir-fries and casseroles.

### 2 Trim or Calci-Trim milk

Choose trim/Calci-Trim milk (green/yellow top) instead of full-cream milk (dark-blue top) and save kilojoules and saturated fat.

### 3 Reduced-fat, Greek-style yoghurt

Satisfies any urge for creaminess with fewer kilojoules.

### 4 Tomato paste

Tubes keep for ages in the fridge. Great as a low-kilojoule pizza sauce or to boost flavour in tomato-based dishes.

### 5 Parmesan cheese

While energy-dense, a little goes a long way. Sprinkle lightly on Italian-style dishes or use a little to boost the flavour of reduced-fat cheese.

### 6 Jars of curry paste

Adds heaps of flavour for relatively few kilojoules. Add one or two tablespoons to cooked chicken or fish with a little reduced-fat coconut milk for a tasty and easy meal. Watch the sodium (salt) in these, though.

### 7 Jars of grated ginger and crushed garlic

While fresh is always nicer, these are great when you are in a hurry. Low in kilojoules, they are useful flavour boosters.

### 8 Grainy bread

Keep a loaf of high-fibre bread in the freezer. Control your intake by only taking out the slices you need.

### 9 Jar of capers

Big on flavour and low in kilojoules, these are great in pasta sauces, on pizza or sprinkled over salad.

### 10 Frozen edamame beans

These make a delicious snack or addition to a stir-fry.

## Smart shopping with type 2 diabetes

Shopping for your new diabetes-friendly life means being thoughtful about how and what you choose. We take you on a healthy supermarket tour.

### Fruit and vege aisle

#### What to choose

Here is a place to go wild in the aisles!

**Aim for three to four handfuls of these a day and a variety of colours. The vege section can be split into two parts:**

**1** The starchy vegetables including potato, kumara, yam, taro, green banana and corn. These are good alternatives to pasta, rice and bread. Keep skins on where possible to boost your fibre intake.

**2** Non-starchy vegetables, from green leafy varieties to mushrooms and eggplant.

#### Smart shopper tips

- Try new things such as alfalfa sprouts, broccolini and purple cauliflower.

- A coleslaw mix (without dressing) is a fabulous crunchy alternative to a lettuce-based salad.

- With fruit, aim for variety. A serving of fresh fruit is equivalent to a medium-sized apple, two small apricots or a handful of grapes.

#### What to avoid

Don't avoid anything here. Eat lots of things from this section in a wide variety.

#### Traps to watch out for

Bananas will make other fruit ripen more quickly, so if you want your pears softer, put the bananas on top. If not, keep them separate.

## Canned goods aisle

### What to choose

- Canned vegetables can be good when you want help to whip up a quick meal. Choose foods canned in water rather than brine (salted water) or oil. If there is no salt-free version, be sure to rinse vegetables before you use them.

- Canned tomatoes are a fast way to make a sauce or add more veges to a dish. Add a can of tomatoes to a can of baked beans to increase the veg content and dilute the salt. As mentioned before, cooked tomatoes are a great source of the powerful antioxidant lycopene.

### Smart shopper tips

- Canned pulses such as lentils, chickpeas, kidney beans and mixed beans, are useful to add to salads, sauces and soups. They can also be blended with herbs and spices to make fabulous dips.

## Dried foods aisle

### What to choose

The fabulous thing about dried foods is they have a long shelf life and are easy to store. Great dried foods include pasta, rice, couscous, lentils, beans, fruit and nuts. Pasta is low-GI and is an excellent carbohydrate base for lunch and dinner meals.

### Smart shopper tips

- Brown rice is higher in fibre and other nutrients than white rice as it is a whole grain. White basmati rice has the advantage of being slowly absorbed by the body, but is lower in fibre than brown rice. Long grain and jasmine rices are also good. Aim for variety.

- Lentils, beans and chickpeas are the kings of dried food, being high in fibre and a good source of carbohydrate and protein. Canned versions can be more convenient but, for value, cook up a large batch of dried beans and freeze them.

- Small cans of flavoured salmon and tuna (choose lower-sodium options) are good for keeping in your drawer at work for a quick and healthy lunch or snack and can be a great way to get kids eating fish.

- Ready-made sauces are useful for quick meals. Some are high in salt and fat, so using them in small quantities is the way to go, or make your own sauces using the ingredients list of the back of a sauce jar for inspiration. You can't go far wrong with fresh or jarred ginger, crushed garlic, coriander and a splash of soy and sweet chilli sauces.

- Curry pastes are a great flavour base for a dish. Drain off any excess oil. The pastes allow you to add your own liquid to make up a sauce, rather than eating the oil, cream or sugar in some of the ready-made versions. Try using a can of light evaporated milk as an alternative to cream in recipes, or add tomatoes or flavoured baked beans to a homemade curry.

- Couscous can make the base of a quick and easy side dish or salad, and can be used as an alternative to pasta or rice. It can be fairly bland by itself so make it with stock (instead of water) or add lots of fresh herbs and spices.

- Noodles can add interest to a stir-fry, soup or salad. Go for egg noodles without flavouring or rice noodles.

- Cereal is a great start to the day. There are so many to choose from, there's bound to be at least one healthier (whole grain or oat-based) cereal that suits your taste buds, budget and lifestyle.

### What to avoid

- Dried packet noodles and ready meals are often high in saturated fat and salt and not a healthy everyday choice.

- Flavour sachets for chilli con carne, lasagne and so on are often very high in

- Peanut butter, made with a high percentage of peanuts, is a healthy way to have a small amount of good fat, but if you're watching your weight, spread thinly.

### What to avoid

- Fish canned in oil
- Canned fruits in syrup
- Peanut butter with added salt and sugar

### Traps to watch out for

- High-salt items: Aim for a sodium intake of less than 2000mg/day. Look at the back of your jars. You might be surprised to see where salt is hiding.
- Dressings can be a trap, especially if you load them on. Be wary and check the labels, they can be high in added sugar and salt.



salt and pricey. Look at the back of the packet. Can you make your own?

- Potato chips: Many are a whopping 33 per cent fat, a third of the packet! While many are made with healthier types of fat these days, the high fat content means they pack a punch in energy density – lots of kilojoules for little nutrition. Go for vegetable sticks or try toasted pita bread or wraps sliced into wedges instead.

### Traps to watch out for

- Many processed mixes in this section are high in salt.

- Lollies – '99 per cent fat-free'. Since when did jelly sweets have fat in them? It's the excess energy we don't want – there are 3000 kilojoules in a 200g pack of lollies and seven tablespoons of sugar.

## Meat, poultry, fish and eggs

### What to choose

Leaner meats tend to be more expensive, but there's less waste. A piece of meat about the size of the palm of your hand is a good portion.

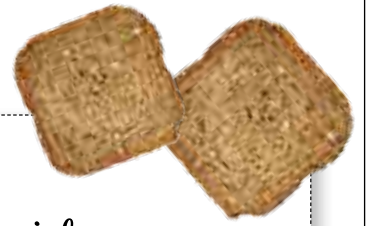
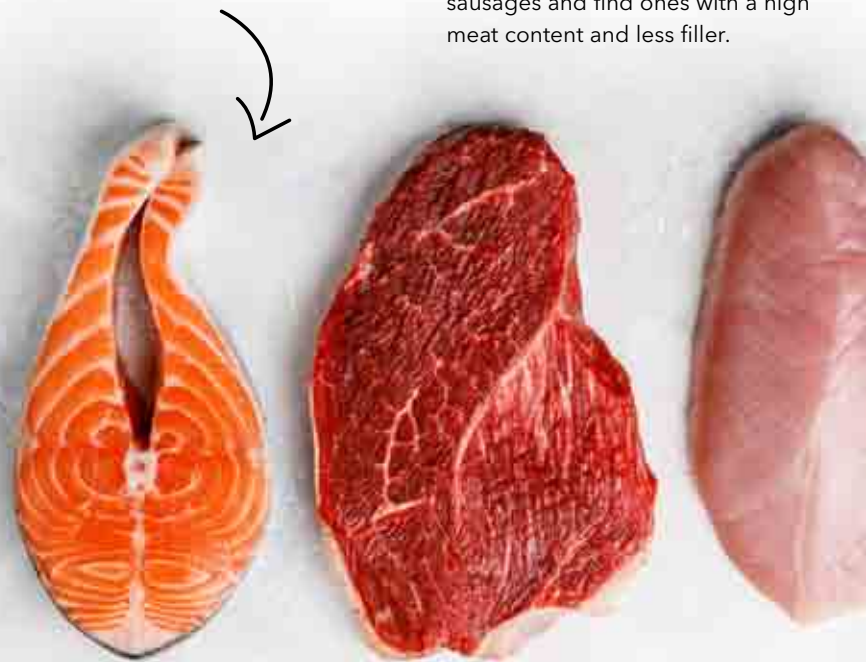
### Smart shopper tips

- Beef mince is graded into premium, prime and choice. The fat content is reflected in the price, premium being the leanest.
- With chicken, try to go for skinless varieties, or remove the skin.
- Chicken mince is a great alternative to beef, lamb or pork mince for homemade burgers, lasagne and bolognese.
- Fish (especially oily fish) is a great source of omega-3.

- The Heart Foundation recommends people with a higher risk of heart disease can eat up to six eggs per week but, for healthy people, there is no recommended limit.

### What to avoid

- The white bits in meat and the skin on chicken.
- Heavily marinated meats - they can be high in salt.
- Highly processed meats, including pepperoni and salami. Using a very small amount of these to flavour a whole dish such as a pasta sauce or risotto can be fine, on occasion, but they're not ideal for everyday eating.
- Sausages can be like little saturated fat sponges. Look at the fat content of sausages and find ones with a high meat content and less filler.



## Bread aisle

### What to choose

Here is a really simple way to think about bread. There are three different types:

- The best, nutritionally, is mostly made from wholemeal flour with added grains. This includes most Vogel's, Burgen and similar home brands.
- The high-fibre, grainy breads commonly have a white flour base with added grains, eg, Molenberg, Goodness Grains and Mackenzie.
- Wheatmeal, white and white high-fibre breads do vary but, generally, they don't have the full nutritional advantage of the ones with 'the grainy bits' in them.

### Smart shopper tips

- Using a good whole grain as your main type of bread is best. This also means you can enjoy other lower-fibre items from time to time such as wraps, English muffins and bagels.
- Wheatmeal and grainy pita breads can be healthy alternatives to plain breads and fruit toast can make a quick breakfast or snack.

### What to avoid

- Processed white, fluffy breads.
- Garlic butter-filled breads on a regular basis

### Traps to watch out for

- Unsliced loaves - you may be tempted to cut yourself a bigger slice than you need.
- Some bread is quite high in salt. Look for the mg sodium per 100g on the nutrition information panel and compare breads.

## The chilled food aisle

### What to choose

Choose reduced-fat and lower-sodium options where possible for dairy. Look for calcium-fortified when it comes to dairy alternatives.

● **Yoghurt** is the nutritional wonder of the chilled section. Packed with protein and calcium, it can be a healthy dessert or an easy snack. Aim for yoghurts with under 2g fat/100g. It's good to flavour natural, unsweetened yoghurt by adding fresh, canned or dried fruit because you avoid added sugar and flavourings. Lite versions tend to be lower in fat and sugar but they vary, so check the label for the grams of sugar per 100g and make comparisons.

● **Cheese** Consider the fat and salt content as well as how much you are going to have. For a standard cracker topping or sandwich filler, cottage

cheese or extra light Philadelphia cream cheese are great options.

● **A strongly flavoured vintage cheddar** or parmesan can be a good way to make a little cheese to go a long way in a sauce, pasta or rice dish.

● **Edam** is lower in fat and kJ than standard cheeses and, for those who prefer tasty cheddar, Noble cheese has a similar fat and kJ profile. Keep to small amounts though.

● **Milk** For most of us, a lower fat milk, such as light blue, green or yellow labelled, is ideal.

● **Soy and nut milks** Look at the sugar content as some have quite a lot of added sugar. Choose those with added calcium.

● **Dips** Aim for one with under 10g fat/100g and use sensibly. Dips, such as pesto, are based on healthy fats but can be energy dense, so enjoy in small amounts.

● **Spreads** Look for something low in saturated and trans fats.

### What to avoid

Cream, lard, large amounts of cheese and high-saturated-fat dips.

### Traps to watch out for

● Look at the back of yoghurt pots and compare sugar and kJ per serving. If you are trying to lose weight, go for one very low in kJ and sugar.

● Feta cheese is very tasty, but high in salt. Look for reduced-salt varieties and use in small quantities.

## The frozen aisle

### What to choose

There are an increasing number of potato-based, fish and meat options cooked in healthy fat. Look for products with under 5g fat/100g and check on the ingredients list to ensure the product has been made with a healthy fat such as canola or sunflower oil, rather than beef fat, vegetable oil or palm oil.

With meat and fish products, check the words 'meat' and 'fish' are very high up on the ingredients list.

### Smart shopper tips

● Frozen veges are a convenient, cost-effective option, especially when the veges you like aren't in season. As they are picked and snap frozen at their peak, they are full of nutrients and there is a fabulous range available.

● The frozen section is a great place to find sweet goodies, including frozen fruits, that make fast smoothies, easy desserts and add a nutritional boost to breakfasts.

● Ice creams. Lite versions can be lower in kJ but are still best kept for treats. They are good served with fruit. Ice cream is made predominately from milk, cream and sugar in various proportions. There are some frozen yoghurts on the market that are lower in fat, but still high in sugar. There are also sugar-free options, but they can be expensive and we still need to be mindful of portion size.

### What to avoid

● High-fat potato products, such as hash browns cooked in beef fat or vegetable oil.

● Battered meat, chicken and fish products high in saturated fat.

● Pies, pastry, sausage rolls, etc, which are high in saturated fat and energy with few or no vegetables.

### Traps to watch out for

● Low-cholesterol claims. Cholesterol in food makes no difference to blood cholesterol, unlike saturated fat. This claim can often give a false sense of security.

● Check the saturated fat on the label.

### Reading labels

Remember that food has to be made of something. If a product is low in fat, it is likely to be higher in carbohydrate (which may be sugar) or protein.

Ingredients lists are in weight order - the first ingredients on the list will be the main part of that food product.

Compare similar foods, such as different cereals, yoghurts and so on, to familiarise yourself with each brand and how they differ. With savoury items, look at the saturated fat, fibre and salt. For sweet items, the amount of sugar and kilojoules are the most important.

# Diabetes-friendly recipes

At HFG we have hundreds of diabetes-friendly recipes and we are adding more all the time. Start with these 10 and head to [healthyfood.com](http://healthyfood.com) for inspiration.

## Swedish meatballs with vege mash and slaw

Serves 6 Time to make 35 minutes

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 500g lean beef mince
- ½ cup panko crumbs
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon each ground allspice, nutmeg and cloves, plus extra nutmeg for mash (optional)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 large carrots, peeled, roughly chopped



- 2 parsnips, peeled, roughly chopped
- 3 cups peeled, roughly chopped pumpkin
- 1 tablespoon reduced-fat spread
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1 cup reduced-salt beef stock
- ¾ cup reduced-fat sour cream
- ½ cup trim milk
- 450g prepared coleslaw (omit dressing)
- 1 lemon, juiced
- ½ cup toasted sliced almonds, to garnish
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley, to garnish

- 1** In a large frying pan, heat 1 tablespoon of the oil over medium. Add onion and garlic and cook, stirring, for about 2 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl. Add mince, breadcrumbs, egg, spices and salt and combine well. Roll into tablespoon-sized balls, you should get about 24 balls.
- 2** Add remaining oil to the frying pan and cook meatballs in two batches for about 8-10 minutes, per batch, until browned and cooked through. Transfer to a plate.
- 3** Meanwhile, in a large saucepan, place carrot, parsnip and pumpkin and cover with water. Bring to the boil then reduce heat and simmer until tender. Drain, cover and set aside.
- 4** To make the gravy, in the frying pan, melt

spread until bubbling. Whisk in flour until lightly browned. Gradually whisk in beef stock and ½ cup water and cook for about 3-4 minutes until thickened, stirring constantly. Remove pan from heat and stir sour cream into the gravy.

- 5** Mash vegetables with milk (and extra nutmeg, if using) until smooth. Season to taste.
- 6** Dress coleslaw with lemon juice and toss.
- 7** Spoon gravy over meatballs and serve with mash and coleslaw. Garnish with almonds and parsley.

HIGH FIBRE LOW SODIUM

PER SERVE (6 serves)

Energy	1820kJ(436cal)	Fibre	10g
Protein	27g	Sodium	420mg
Total Fat	21g	Calcium	190mg
- sat fat	6g	Iron	3.5mg
Carbs	30g		
- sugars	17g		

### Tip

• **Make it gluten free** Use gluten-free breadcrumbs and flour. Check spices, stock and sour cream are gluten free.

RECIPE AND STYLING JO BRIDGFORD  
PHOTOGRAPHY BRYCE CARLETON

## Baked almond-crusted fish and kumara chips

Serves 4 Time to make 30 minutes  
✓ gluten free



- 500g kumara, cut into thin wedges
- ½ cup roasted almonds
- 4 x 150g firm white fish fillets
- 2 cups trimmed snow peas or green beans
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 2 cups alfalfa sprouts
- ½ cup chopped fresh mint
- 50g crumbled feta
- 1 lemon, juiced, plus wedges, to serve

- 1** Preheat oven to 200°C and line two baking trays with baking paper. Spread kumara over one tray and spray with olive oil. Bake for 20-25 minutes, or until golden and tender.
- 2** In a small food processor, blitz almonds until finely chopped. On a large plate, spread out in a thin layer. Press fish fillets, one piece at a time, into almond mixture to coat on one side. Place fish,

almond side up, on the second tray. Bake for 10-15 minutes, or until fish is cooked through.

- 3** Meanwhile, in a saucepan of boiling water blanch snow peas and peas for 2 minutes, or until just cooked. Drain and refresh under cold water. Drain again.
- 4** In a medium bowl, combine snow peas, peas, sprouts, mint, feta and lemon juice. To serve, divide salad, baked fish and kumara chips among 4 serving plates, with lemon wedges on the side.

HIGH FIBRE LOW SODIUM HIGH IRON 2½ VEGES

PER SERVE (4 serves)

Energy	1930kJ(462cal)	Fibre	10g
Protein	40g	Sodium	400mg
Total Fat	18g	Calcium	200mg
- sat fat	3g	Iron	4.5mg
Carbs	30g		
- sugars	11g		

RECIPE MEGAN CAMERON-LEE  
PHOTOGRAPHY MARK O'MEARA  
STYLING JULIZ BERESFORD



## Tandoori chicken pizzas

Serves 4

Time to make 25 minutes

- 2 tablespoons **tandoori paste**
- ½ cup **low-fat plain yoghurt**
- 4 plain **naan breads**
- 3 cups **baby spinach**
- ½ medium **red onion**, sliced
- 1 medium **red capsicum**, sliced
- 3 cups shredded **cooked or barbecued chicken breast**, skin removed
- 4 tablespoons **slivered almonds**
- 6 cups **mixed salad leaves** or chopped **iceberg lettuce**
- 1 **carrot**, peeled into ribbons
- 4 tablespoons **balsamic vinaigrette** (see tips)

- 1** Preheat oven to 200°C. Place a baking tray or pizza stone inside.
- 2** In a small bowl, combine tandoori paste with half of the yoghurt and spread over naan breads. Top with baby spinach, onion, capsicum, chicken and almonds.

**3** Remove heated baking tray from the oven, line with baking paper and place naan pizzas on top. Bake for 15-20 minutes, or until the edges are golden and crispy and toppings are hot.

**4** Meanwhile, in a bowl, combine salad leaves and carrot ribbons to make a side salad. Dress with vinaigrette. Cut pizzas into halves or triangles, drizzle with remaining yoghurt and serve with salad.

PER SERVE (4 serves)	
Energy 2180kJ(520cal)	Fibre 6g
Protein 40g	Sodium 320mg
Total Fat 18g	Calcium 190mg
- sat fat 4g	Iron 4.5mg
Carbs 50g	
- sugars 11g	

### Tips

- **Make vinaigrette with 2 parts balsamic vinegar to 1 part olive oil.**
- **Make it gluten free** Use gluten-free pizza bases and check tandoori paste is gluten free.

RECIPE MEGAN CAMERON-LEE PHOTOGRAPHY MARK O'MEARA STYLING YAEL GRINHAM



## Creamy chilli prawn pasta

Serves 2

Time to make 25 minutes

- 160g **dried pasta**, eg, **spaghetti** or **tagliatelle**
- 1 tablespoon **olive oil**
- 1 clove **garlic**
- 1 **spring onion**, sliced
- 400g can **cherry tomatoes**
- ½ teaspoon **chilli flakes**, or more to taste
- 230g **prawns**, deveined, tails removed (thawed if frozen)
- 150g **frozen spinach**
- ½ cup **reduced-fat sour cream** or **reduced-fat, Greek-style yoghurt**
- cracked black pepper**
- squeeze of **lemon juice**
- fresh parsley**, to garnish

- 1** In a saucepan, cook pasta following packet instructions.
- 2** Meanwhile, in a frying pan, heat oil over medium. Add garlic and spring onion and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add tomatoes (including juice) and chilli flakes and simmer for about 5 minutes, until liquid has reduced slightly. Add

prawns and spinach and cook another 2-3 minutes, until prawns are cooked through.

**3** Remove from heat. Add sour cream and gently combine. Add pepper to taste. Serve pasta with a squeeze of lemon juice over the top. Garnish with parsley and extra chilli, if desired.



PER SERVE (2 serves)	
Energy 2390kJ(571cal)	Fibre 12g
Protein 36g	Sodium 530mg
Total Fat 17g	Calcium 500mg
- sat fat 6g	Iron 5.5mg
Carbs 65g	
- sugars 14g	

### Tips

- **Make it gluten free** Use gluten-free pasta and check sour cream or yoghurt is gluten free.
- **Make it vegan** Use tempeh instead of prawns and a soy yoghurt.

RECIPE AND STYLING NIKI BEZZANT PHOTOGRAPHY BRUCE CARLETON



## Bunless Mexican burgers

Serves 4

Time to make 30 minutes

✓ no dairy

- 500g **kumara**, cut into thin wedges
- 1 tablespoon **olive oil**
- 20g packet **fajita** or **Mexican spice mix**
- 1 small **onion**, grated and squeezed
- 400g **lean beef mince**
- 400g can **red kidney beans** in **spring water**, rinsed, drained and roughly mashed
- 2 cloves **garlic**, grated
- 2 medium **tomatoes**, sliced
- 225g can **sliced beetroot**, drained
- 2 cups **baby rocket**
- 1/3 cup **tomato salsa**, to serve (optional)

- 1** Preheat oven to 210°C. Line a large baking tray with baking paper.
- 2** In a bowl, combine kumara, oil and 3 teaspoons of the spice mix. Stir to coat. Transfer to the baking tray and arrange in a single layer. Bake for 20-25 minutes, tossing halfway through cooking, or until kumara is tender.
- 3** Meanwhile, in the same bowl, place

onion, mince, remaining spice mix, kidney beans and garlic. Combine thoroughly, using your hands if needed. Divide mixture into 4 portions and shape into 10cm patties.

**4** Spray a large non-stick frying pan with oil and set over a medium heat. Add patties to the pan and reduce heat to low. Cook for 8-10 minutes, turning once, or until cooked through.

**5** Divide kumara wedges among 4 plates and top with burger patties, tomato slices and beetroot. Top with rocket and serve with a little tomato salsa on the side, if using.



PER SERVE (4 serves)			
Energy	1830kJ(437cal)	Fibre	11g
Protein	28g	Sodium	450mg
Total Fat	10g	Calcium	100mg
- sat fat	3g	Iron	5.5mg
Carbs	50g		
- sugars	23g		

### Tip

- **Make it gluten free** Check spice mix and salsa are gluten free.

RECIPE DARLENE ALLSTON  
PHOTOGRAPHY MARK O'MEARA  
STYLING JULIZ BERESFORD

## Warm broccoli and miso-roasted buttercup salad with peanut dressing

Serves 2 Time to make 35 minutes

✓ no dairy ✓ vegetarian

- 1 tablespoon **miso paste**
- 1 tablespoon **olive oil**
- 2 cups 2cm-sized pieces **buttercup squash**
- 2 cloves **garlic**, unpeeled
- 2 tablespoons **peanut butter**
- 2 tablespoons **orange juice**
- 1 teaspoon **reduced-salt soy sauce**
- pinch **chilli flakes**



- 2 cups chopped **broccoli florets** and **stalks**
- spray oil**
- 2 cups **rocket leaves**
- 400g can **lentils in spring water**, rinsed and drained
- 2 tablespoons roughly chopped **roasted peanuts**, to serve

- 1** Preheat oven to 200°C. Line a roasting dish with baking paper. In a large bowl, combine miso paste and olive oil. Add squash and toss well to coat. Place in prepared dish with garlic cloves (leave skins on) and roast in the oven for 20-30 minutes, until squash is tender.
- 2** Meanwhile, in a small bowl, combine peanut butter, orange juice, soy sauce and chilli flakes, adding a little hot water to get dressing to a smooth, pourable consistency.
- 3** 15 minutes into cooking time, add broccoli to squash dish. Spray with a little oil and return to oven for remaining cooking time.

**4** When squash is ready, remove dish from the oven. Squeeze garlic from skins over vegetables. Add rocket leaves and lentils and toss well, warming the lentils and wilting the rocket.

**5** Divide vegetables between two bowls. Drizzle with peanut dressing and sprinkle with roasted peanuts.



PER SERVE (2 serves)			
Energy	2010kJ(480cal)	Fibre	18g
Protein	20g	Sodium	540mg
Total Fat	27g	Calcium	160mg
- sat fat	4g	Iron	5mg
Carbs	30g		
- sugars	12g		

### Tip

- **Make it gluten free** Check miso and soy sauce are gluten free.

### Make it low FODMAP

Swap the garlic for 2 teaspoons of garlic-infused oil.

RECIPE AND STYLING NIKI BEZZANT  
PHOTOGRAPHY MELANIE JENKINS





## Chicken stroganoff

Serves 2 Time to make 30 minutes

- ½ cup brown rice
- spray oil
- 2 spring onions, chopped
- 2 cups broccoli florets
- 3½ cups sliced mushrooms
- 300g skinless chicken breasts, sliced into strips
- ¾ cup reduced-salt chicken stock
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- ½ teaspoon smoked paprika, plus extra to garnish
- ½ cup frozen broad beans, thawed and pods removed
- ⅓ cup reduced-fat sour cream
- fresh chives, to garnish

**1** In a saucepan, place rice and 1 cup water and stir. Bring to the boil over a medium-high heat. Reduce heat to low and cover, simmering, for 20-25 minutes, until rice is cooked.

**2** Meanwhile, spray a large pan with oil and set over a medium-high heat. Add spring onions and broccoli and cook, stirring, for 3-4 minutes. Add mushrooms and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Remove veges from pan and set aside.

**3** Spray pan again with oil and add chicken. Cook for 5 minutes until lightly browned. Add stock, mustard, Worcestershire sauce and smoked paprika. Add veges back to pan, along with broad beans, and bring to a simmer. Cook for 5 minutes, until chicken is cooked through. Add sour cream and stir to combine.

**4** Divide stroganoff between 2 plates and serve with brown rice. Garnish with chives and paprika.



PER SERVE (2 serves)			
Energy	2290kJ(547cal)	Fibre	10g
Protein	49g	Sodium	550mg
Total Fat	15g	Calcium	160mg
- sat fat	5g	Iron	4mg
Carbs	50g		
- sugars	9g		

RECIPE NIKI BEZZANT  
PHOTOGRAPHY MELANIE JENKINS  
STYLING JO BRIDGFORD



## Spicy chicken tacos with slaw and avocado dressing

Serves 8

Time to make 30 minutes, plus 2-3 hours marinating

- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- ½ teaspoon chilli flakes
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ¼ cup lime juice
- 1 kg skinless chicken breast fillets, halved horizontally
- ½ red cabbage (450g), finely shredded
- 4 large carrots, grated
- 1 cup roughly chopped fresh coriander
- 1 red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 large avocado, mashed
- ½ cup low-fat plain yoghurt
- cracked black pepper
- 16 small corn tortillas, warmed, to serve

**1** In a large glass or ceramic dish, combine spices, chilli flakes, oil and 2 tablespoons of the lime juice. Add chicken and turn to coat. Cover and refrigerate for 2-3 hours.

**2** Preheat barbecue or large chargrill pan to medium-high. Grill chicken for 3-4 minutes each side, or until golden and cooked through. Place on a large plate, loosely cover with foil and set aside to rest for 5 minutes. Thinly slice the chicken.

**3** Meanwhile, in a large bowl combine cabbage, carrot, coriander and onion. In a small bowl, mix avocado, yoghurt and remaining lime juice until smooth. Season with pepper.

**4** To serve, divide tortillas among 8 plates and fill with chicken, slaw and avocado dressing.



PER SERVE (8 serves)			
Energy	1980kJ(474cal)	Fibre	8g
Protein	36g	Sodium	150mg
Total Fat	13g	Calcium	110mg
- sat fat	2g	Iron	3mg
Carbs	50g		
- sugars	9g		

### Tip

- **Make it gluten free** Check spices and tortillas are gluten free.

RECIPE CHRISSEY FREER  
PHOTOGRAPHY MARK O'MEARA  
STYLING JULZ BERESFORD

## Chicken, leek and mushroom pie

Serves 6 Hands-on time 20 minutes

Cooking time 35 minutes

### spray oil

1 tablespoon olive oil

900g boneless, skinless chicken thighs, fat trimmed and chopped in 2-3cm pieces

1 large leek, white part only, cut in 1cm slices



4 cups sliced button mushrooms

2 carrots, chopped

1 cup frozen peas

4 stalks celery, sliced finely

5 sprigs fresh thyme, chopped

1 sprig fresh rosemary, chopped

1½ cups reduced-salt chicken stock

3 tablespoons cornflour

1 cup trim milk

pinch salt

cracked black pepper

2 sheets pre-rolled, frozen reduced-fat puff or flaky pastry

**1** Preheat oven to 220°C. Lightly grease a pie dish with spray oil. Set aside.

**2** In a large frying pan, heat olive oil over medium-high. Add chicken and brown for a couple of minutes (don't worry if it's not completely cooked through). Set chicken aside in a bowl.

**3** In the same pan, reduce heat to medium-low and cook vegetables until they start to soften. Add herbs and stock and bring to a simmer.

**4** In a small bowl, create a smooth paste with cornflour and some of the milk. Add paste, remaining milk and salt and pepper to pan. Add chicken. Stir and

simmer for 5 minutes until chicken is cooked through.

**5** Add mixture to pie dish. Cover pie with pastry sheets, sealing edges with your fingers. Slice across into pastry top with a knife to allow steam to escape. Bake for 35-40 minutes, until golden.

2  
VEGES

### PER SERVE (6 serves)

Energy 1880kJ(449cal)	Fibre	5g
Protein 38g	Sodium	530mg
Total Fat 17g	Calcium	130mg
- sat fat 6g	Iron	3.5mg
Carbs 35g		
- sugars 8g		

SEE PAGE 93  
FOR DETAILS

### Tips

- To make ahead, once cool, place pie tin in freezer bag and freeze for up to four weeks. Reheat at 180°C until piping hot.

- Make double the pie filling and refrigerate half for up to two days. Reheat thoroughly and serve on brown rice with wilted spinach or steamed broccoli.

RECIPE ALICE BRODIE PHOTOGRAPHY MELANIE JENKINS  
STYLING SARAH SWAIN



## Mediterranean mince and eggplant bake

Serves 4

Time to make 30 minutes

### spray oil

1 eggplant, cut into 8 slices lengthways

500g lean beef mince

1 onion, finely chopped

3 tablespoons sun-dried tomato pesto

400g cherry tomatoes

400g can chickpeas, rinsed and drained

¾ cup boiling water

3 courgettes, julienned or peeled into ribbons

75g grated parmesan

fresh basil, to garnish (optional)

**1** Spray a griddle pan with oil and set over a medium heat. Cook eggplant slices in batches, 3-5 minutes each side, until lightly charred and tender. Set aside.

**2** Meanwhile, heat a non-stick pan over medium-high and add mince. Cook, breaking up mince, until browned.

Add onion and cook until softened. Add pesto and cook for a few more minutes. Add half of the cherry tomatoes, the chickpeas and boiling water. Bring to the boil, reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until thickened.

**3** Preheat oven grill to 180°C. In a saucepan of boiling water, place courgettes for 1 minute. Drain.

**4** In an ovenproof dish, place eggplant slices and spread mince mixture over the top. Add courgette ribbons and remaining cherry tomatoes. Top with parmesan. Grill for 5 minutes, or until cheese is melted. Garnish with fresh basil, if using.

LOW KJ HIGH FIBRE LOW SODIUM HIGH CALCIUM HIGH IRON 4½ VEGES

### PER SERVE (4 serves)

Energy 1690kJ(405cal)	Fibre	9g
Protein 42g	Sodium	340mg
Total Fat 15g	Calcium	260mg
- sat fat 6g	Iron	4.5mg
Carbs 20g		
- sugars 10g		

RECIPE AND STYLING SARAH SWAIN PHOTOGRAPHY MELANIE JENKINS

# Why is exercise important in managing diabetes?

Exercise has many benefits, it increases circulation, burns up energy, helps to keep blood glucose levels well controlled and keeps weight down, as well as making you feel good! It may also lead to a reduction in the dose of insulin or tablets you need to take. Recent guidelines recommend not sitting for more than 30 minutes at a time. Standing up and moving around at intervals helps blood glucose control.

According to the American Diabetes Association (ADA), anyone with type 2 diabetes should participate in at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity or at least 90 minutes of vigorous activity each week to improve glycaemic control, assist with weight management and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. The ADA also recommends this exercise be distributed over at least three days of the week, with no more than two consecutive days without physical activity. This equates to a minimum of 22 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise each day.

Weight-loss aside, US research shows

that more than four hours of exercise each week can result in a significant reduction in the risk of type 2 diabetes for people with pre-diabetes. Most importantly, if people with type 2 diabetes make exercise a regular part of their life, their risk of early death decreases substantially.

## Exercise with weights - three times a week

Just like aerobic exercise, resistance training improves both insulin sensitivity in the muscles and blood glucose control. Research shows resistance training increases lean muscle mass, which is associated with a decrease in HbA1c (a measure of a person's average glucose levels over the previous two to three months).

People with well-controlled type 2 diabetes will ideally engage in resistance exercise that targets all major muscle groups three times per week. The ADA recommends three sets of 8-10 repetitions for each muscle group,

using a weight heavy enough that your muscles are fatigued after those 8-10 repetitions.

## Lose weight (even a little can make a big difference)

Fortunately, you don't need to lose a huge amount to improve your health - just five to nine kilograms will help people with excess weight. Losing weight is probably the best thing you can do to manage your type 2 diabetes if you are overweight. Excess weight increases the body's resistance to insulin, making it harder to control blood glucose levels. Losing weight can increase the body's sensitivity to insulin and reduce your likelihood of developing heart disease and certain types of cancer. It has also been shown that moderate weight loss can reduce both high blood pressure and glucose levels, as well as improve blood cholesterol levels, which just goes to show how important a small reduction in weight can be.

## Exercise for weight loss: *Beginner's plan*

		M	T	W	T	F	S	S
WEEK	1	10-30 minutes moderate intensity	10-30 minutes moderate intensity	Rest	10-30 minutes moderate intensity	Rest	10-30 minutes moderate intensity	Rest
	2	10-30 minutes moderate intensity	Rest	10-30 minutes moderate intensity	10-30 minutes moderate intensity	Rest	10-30 minutes moderate intensity	Rest
	3	15-30 minutes moderate intensity	15-30 minutes moderate intensity	Rest	15-30 minutes moderate intensity	Rest	15-30 minutes moderate intensity	Rest
	4	15-30 minutes moderate intensity	Rest	Strength training 30+ minutes	15-30 minutes moderate intensity	Rest	Flexibility training 30+ minutes	15-30 minutes moderate intensity

### What does it mean?

#### Strength training

Also known as resistance training, strength training conditions your muscles, joints and bones using resistance as force. You can use a resistance band, hand weights, your body weight or machines.

#### Moderate intensity

You should be working yourself hard enough to raise your heart rate and break a sweat, but still carry on a conversation.

**Activities:** walking, Pilates, light cycling, dancing, a light swim.

#### Flexibility training

This helps lengthen your muscles so you can move your joints through a full range of motion.

**Activities:** stretching, yoga, Pilates.

# Manage your stress

A diabetes diagnosis can make for a stressful time, but looking after your mental health and managing stress levels can help keep diabetes under control.

## RESILIENCE

### WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

According to occupational therapist and mental health and addictions expert Lindsay Coup, resilience is 'the ability to adapt and absorb life's challenges and changes, to carry on and persevere in the face of adversity'. Being resilient can help our performance at work and with our relationships. From childhood, we are exposed to stressors that can vary in severity depending on several factors, including genetic, social, psychological and environmental influences and, as we grow and develop, we learn how to manage these stressors - sometimes positively, sometimes not so much.

"There are two ways of coping with stress - adaptive, which are positive strategies to manage stressful situations and build resilience; and maladaptive, which are habits we take on that don't allow us to adapt to a situation, and can often compound the problem," Ms Coup explains. "Resilience to stress can be built by, first, understanding what our coping strategies are and implementing them in a way that builds our strength to cope with stress."

### LEARN YOUR TRIGGERS

Unfortunately, there is no 'one size fits all' strategy, as no two people are exactly alike. "It's important to remember that everyone's different, and what causes stress for one person won't bother someone else," explains clinical psychologist Chantal Hoistee. "I call it the 'green brain' and 'red brain' states. Green brain is when you feel in control and calm; red brain is when you've reacted to a stress trigger. Building resilience to a red brain state starts with understanding what your triggers are and learning to pay attention to them." ❏

Life can be stressful at times. A manager, at work makes your job a misery, the kids are playing up, you've suffered an illness or injury that affects how you operate, there's way more month than money... we all know that feeling of fighting an uphill battle.

Without fail, every one of us experiences changes and hiccups that can knock us off-kilter during our lifetime. While some people seem to glide through stress like a swan on a pond, many of us struggle to the point our health and mental wellbeing can take a significant knock. But there's good news for those who are struggling: it is possible to build resilience to stressful situations.

## Habits that **build resilience** and manage stress

Health reporter **Catherine Milford** asks mental health experts for practical ways to bounce back faster from life's curveballs.



For more on managing stress and mental health head to [healthyfood.com](http://healthyfood.com) and browse 'expert advice'

## 10 COPING STRATEGIES

While everyone is different, some coping strategies work for most people. Implementing some, or all, of these changes into your routine can make a big difference to your stress levels and resilience.

**1 FOSTER OPTIMISM** Solution-focused thinking, and a belief that things will work out in the end, can go a long way to helping you through tough times, whether at work or in your personal life. Research on disaster victims revealed an optimistic outlook has beneficial effects on overall wellbeing. A number of studies have shown that visualising 'your best possible self' can boost anyone's optimism. So, if you don't feel naturally optimistic, try examining your negative beliefs and thinking about possibilities where things could go right instead, and spend some time each day dreaming about a future where everything has gone as right as it can. What would it look like? Try to be as detailed as possible.

**2 DON'T RUSH** A lack of time, especially in the morning, is hugely stressful. "It's very difficult to come back from a 'red brain' morning and start afresh," Dr Hofstee says. "Pack your bag the day before, prepare your lunch and get up 10 minutes earlier. These simple changes can transform your morning from difficult and overwhelming, to calm and happy."

**3 FIND OUT WHAT YOU ENJOY DOING AND DO IT** Whether it's taking a minute over morning coffee, cuddling the cat, listening to music, going for a run or fitting in a yoga session, find out what triggers your sense of calm and make time for it. Physical activity is a great way to regulate stress and feeling physically strong can translate to

feeling mentally robust too, so find exercise you enjoy and aim to do it three to four times a week.

**4 GIVE EVERYTHING A HOME** A major source of stress is being in a rush and realising you can't find your keys/phone/glasses. Create a place for everything you need on a daily basis. Put a box by the door for keys and keep your phone somewhere you know you'll find it. Putting everything in one place the night before can remove massive amounts of stress in the morning.

**5 GET SOME FRESH AIR** Nature is a universal de-stressor. Going for a walk after a stressful meeting, or after a rejection or disappointment, can help us digest the situation, often helping us to react to it better. Going for a walk along the beach, or even simply standing outside for a few minutes, is a good way of allowing yourself to assess the situation more positively.

**6 CHOOSE HELPFUL FOODS** When it comes to feeling resilient and able to take the day on, what we eat can matter. "When we're stressed, our body becomes fatigued, and we turn to high-energy foods such as sugars and refined carbohydrates to pick ourselves up," explains nutrition coach Michelle Yandle. "Fizzy drinks, coffee and energy drinks won't do anything for your energy or your stress levels long-term." Choose nutrient-dense foods to help your body perform at its best. A plant-based diet, including plenty of antioxidant-rich green vegetables and fruit, omega-3 from oily fish, B12 from animal products and choline from eggs, can all help your

body and brain operate optimally, giving you a better foundation from which to operate your life.

**7 GET SOME SLEEP** Adequate sleep is vital to mental processes. To optimise sleep patterns, practise good sleep hygiene, which includes going to bed and getting up at around the same times every day; staying away from screens or stimulating tasks for at least 30-40 minutes before bed; sleeping in a cool room (16°-18°C); avoiding caffeine, alcohol or cigarettes before bed; and exercising regularly, but not just before bed. Allowing your body to wind down before bed gives it a chance to increase the sleep hormone melatonin.

**8 TALK IT OUT** There's plenty of truth in the saying 'a problem shared is a problem halved'. Talk to someone you trust, such as a family member, friend or health professional, about challenges you're facing.

**9 TAKE A BREATH** Deep breathing slows down the autonomic nervous system that controls our unconscious bodily functions. Often, we wait until the end of the day to relax, but why wait? Aim to have a 'reset' moment a few times during the day. Remind yourself by putting a note on your computer, writing a B on your hand or having a card in your wallet. Apps such as Calm and Headspace have breathing techniques that can help.

**10 STEP AWAY FROM THE STRESSORS** Whether it's constantly checking your phone, reading the newspaper or getting embroiled in a conversation you know is going to raise a red flag, learning to strategically limit your own stress triggers is crucial. If you know watching the news will upset you, don't do it. And it's okay to let the call from your mum or neighbour go to voicemail sometimes!

Stress in itself isn't the enemy; it's how we handle it that causes problems. When we get stressed, we get a rush of hormones in our system, including adrenaline, and the liver is told to produce more glucose so we have the energy to get away from a dangerous situation - the 'fight or flight' response. But this helpful reaction can cause health issues if stress becomes chronic.

**SIGNS OF CHRONIC STRESS INCLUDE:**

- not sleeping well
- regularly feeling on edge
- an inability to concentrate, or memory lapses
- emotional eating patterns - eating too much or too little
- irritation and/or frustration that affects relationships
- a change in ability to handle common tasks such as cooking dinner
- feeling unmotivated
- making excuses not to see others, isolating yourself.

If you're suffering long-term stress, it's important to develop positive coping strategies. Visit your health professional or [mentalhealth.org.nz](http://mentalhealth.org.nz) for more information. [healthyfood.com](https://www.healthyfood.com)

# Success stories

Being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes doesn't have to mean the end of the world. Here are some inspiring stories that show how others, like you, have tackled it.

FEATURE **hfg**

**HOW I danced away TYPE 2 DIABETES**

Being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes gave Yvonne Appleby a surprising new lease on life, writes **Erica Goatly**.

Erica Goatly is a former magazine editor and has been living with type 1 diabetes for 40 years.

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After seven years of feeling constantly under the weather, and gaining 20kg, Yvonne Appleby knew that something was seriously wrong with her health.

"I felt very unwell and kept going to the doctor with ear infections, colds and sore throats, but she said I did not have diabetes and dismissed me as a hypochondriac," Yvonne says.

It was only when she finally exhibited the classic symptoms of extreme thirst and excessive urination that Yvonne's worst suspicions were confirmed, and she was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes at 46 years old.

"I was immediately put on medication and within three days I finally felt normal again," she says.

From the outset, Yvonne was ready to do whatever it took to manage her condition and regain her health.

"The diagnosis frightened me so much. I knew nothing about diabetes, but once I knew what was wrong with me I just went for it," she says.

### Taking charge

Yvonne's first step was to purchase a blood glucose monitor so she could stay on top of her blood sugar levels – and

then she set out to learn everything she could about living with diabetes. She enrolled in a diabetes education program, which gave her the confidence to tackle her diet and begin to lose weight.

The impact of her health problems and a bitter marriage breakdown had left her on an emotional rollercoaster, and Yvonne recognised that, in order to make lasting changes to her lifestyle, she needed to deal with the stressors that tipped her into a pattern of emotional eating.

"I'd had a bad time and there might have been some comfort eating – my

perfect meal would have been McDonald's," she admits.

"What I learned was how to make sensible food swaps, like wholegrain bread instead of white sliced.

"The message was that you didn't have to go on a special diabetes diet, just make sound food choices."

### Learning to love food

Yvonne learned how to make sense of food labels, and the impact different carbohydrates and sugars have on her on blood sugar levels via the glycaemic

Photo: Diabetes NSW & ACT



Yvonne Appleby regained her health by finding a love of dancing.



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## I developed a really good relationship with food. I learned not to rush.

index (GI). She started to look out for diabetes-friendly recipes in health magazines and changed not only what she ate but how.

"I developed a really good relationship with food. I learned not to rush, but to pay attention to what I was eating and savour every mouthful. For example, if I'm reading or watching TV, I don't notice what I'm eating and I still feel hungry, even though I've just had food."



### Goodbye gym, no more diets

Ironically, her strong desire to tone up and lose weight almost derailed Yvonne's healthy habits when she joined a gym and was put on a restrictive eating plan.

"It wasn't right for me - I felt very much that I was being denied."

"Sure, I lost all the weight and was down from 73kg to 55kg, but I was absolutely craving all the wrong foods like doughnuts and burgers. It was much better for me to find moderation."

Lesson learned. Yvonne then dumped the gym, enrolled in dance classes and found her passion.

"Being so short [she is 146cm tall] I was never any good at sports, but as soon as I took my first dance steps I knew I loved it and was good at it."

### Dancing up a storm

Soon she was doing 9 to 10 hours of dance per week - rock 'n' roll,

Working as a receptionist in a physiotherapy practice has helped as her fitness-savvy workmates support her with lunchtime workouts such as walking, jogging or even boxing.

### Off the meds

With her weight and blood glucose levels back in a healthy range, Yvonne was able to stop taking her diabetes medications but remains focused on exercise and healthy eating to stay well.

"I eat three meals a day ... and I always balance my carbohydrate intake."

### A whole new world

Yvonne's new confidence has inspired the 52-year-old to spread the word. She recently gave a talk to more than 300 people about her journey with type 2 diabetes.

"I would never have thought this illness would change my life for the better," she says.

"Diabetes has opened up a whole new world to me and given me opportunities I would otherwise never have had."

As Yvonne found, a sensible, balanced and nutritious eating plan, coupled with regular exercise, can help you lose weight. But the key to keeping it off means finding the tools to underpin these changes with sustainable lifestyle habits that will help you manage any self-destructive triggers.

## 8 PILLARS OF WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

### 1 Keep it simple

Try not to bite off more than you can chew. Making small, gradual changes brings you the greatest chance of long-term success.

"Remember that every kilo of weight you lose results in a four-fold reduction in the load exerted on your knees," says Caroline West, a GP with a focus on lifestyle and behavioural issues around weight management.

"Type 2 diabetes is often - though not always - a weight issue, and so the challenge is not only to lose the weight, but to then keep it off for good," Dr West says.

### 2 Write it down

"The more you put a framework around your intentions with a weekly plan, the greater your likelihood of doing them," Dr West says.

Tara Griffin, a psychologist with a special interest in diabetes and the psychology of weight management, recommends keeping a food diary to track meals and snacks or, perhaps, a reward chart where positive changes are celebrated.



### 3 Learn to relax

As stress increases blood glucose levels and can often trigger emotional eating, relaxation strategies are an important management tool.

"When we have chronic stress, we tend to eat high-fat, high-kilojoule foods because these counteract the effect of the [stress hormone] cortisol, giving us a high which makes us feel better," Ms Griffin says.

"Food makes us feel less anxious, which is a driving force for a lot of people who are not even aware they are using it to fight stress. So, introducing mindfulness techniques is really helpful."

Ms Griffin recommends using apps on your phone, such as The Smiling Mind, Calm and Head Space, and also simple breathing techniques to diffuse tension.

"I like getting people to imagine blowing out the candles on a birthday cake - it's a nice image to have when someone is having an anxiety attack." ☒



LIGHT

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

MODERATE

#### 4 Rate your hunger

Non-hungry eating is often triggered by emotion - by stress, anxiety, being upset, suppressed feelings, boredom, a sense of reward, or just pure habit.

"Identify these triggers and learn to rate your hunger," Ms Griffin says.

#### 5 Keep it real

Make your changes realistic and they will stick.

"For a habit to become a habit you need to repeat actions until they are something you do on autopilot, like cleaning your teeth," Dr West says.

Rather than enrolling in a hated 6am boot camp which you quickly abandon, consider a less extreme approach such as using a pedometer to track your steps, and setting yourself progressive goals. Likewise, passing up that biscuit with morning tea is more sustainable than skipping lunch.



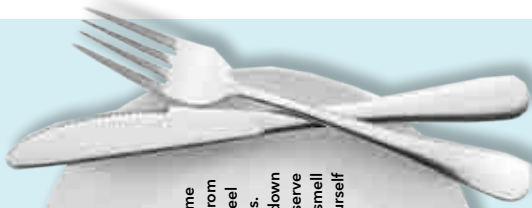
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EXTREME

#### 7 Mealtime rituals

Introducing rituals at every mealtime ensures you will not be distracted from what you are eating and you will feel satisfied afterwards, Dr West says.

"Always have food on a plate, sit down and eat at the table, light a candle, serve small portions and savour the look, smell and taste. It's not about denying yourself food, it's about improving the relationship you have with it."



#### 8 Seek support

Taking charge of your weight and health can be a long journey, so seek support along the way. This could be through gathering information, approaching health professionals, online support groups, or the help of caring friends and relatives. [hfg](#)



#### 6 Manage temptation

Old habits die hard and, while cravings may occasionally surface, having no temptation triggers, such as chocolate, biscuits or chips around the house, will help.

"Keeping your hands busy with a jigsaw, handicrafts, puzzles or even a manicure are also good distractions to keep your mind off food," Ms Griffin says.





## margaret scowen, 56, nelson

### HEALTH CHALLENGES: TYPE 2 DIABETES, HIGH CHOLESTEROL

#### MARGARET'S STORY

In May 2008, my health deteriorated. My doctor suspected glucose intolerance, and after having a blood test, I was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. It was a huge shock, and I felt like crying all the time. But my family didn't see how it could have been such a shock as I was obese, well over 40 years old and I had a family history of type 2 diabetes.

My doctor told me I needed to cut out all the sugar from my diet. Having a sweet tooth, this was extremely difficult. However, I knew I was at a greater risk of having a heart attack or a stroke.

#### about the condition

Type 2 diabetes occurs when your body doesn't produce enough insulin or your body is less sensitive to insulin. Type 2 diabetes is lifestyle related (unlike type 1 diabetes), and is commonly managed with diet and exercise. However medication and/or insulin may also be required at some stage.

#### HFG NUTRITIONIST COMMENTS

"What's great about Margaret's diet is not only did she take a slow and steady approach – ensuring she could stick with her new lifestyle – but she also took the time to really understand her condition. This is so important to understanding why and how to make lifestyle changes – which helps them really stick."

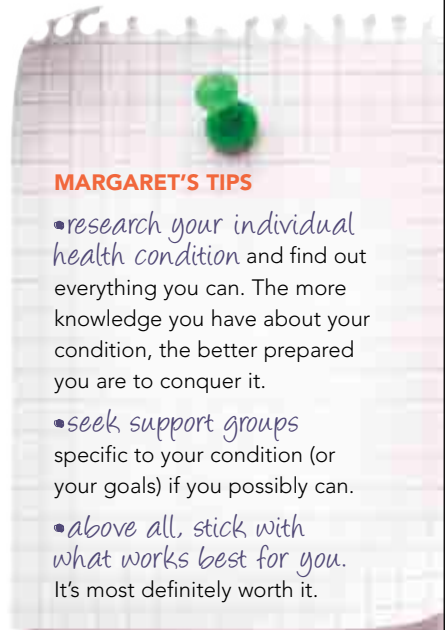
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I had a brother who had experienced both. I knew he wouldn't want me to suffer the same fate. If I wanted to see my grandchildren grow up, I knew I had to do something about it.

I first substituted sugar in my coffee and tea with artificial sweeteners. Then I enrolled in a course for people with this illness.

I didn't even know the difference between type 1 and type 2 diabetes. I learnt so much about diet and the importance of exercising. I was encouraged to join a walking group and other organised exercise. The walking group was great as I was able to meet others who were also keen to exercise and it was easier to stay motivated.

I also joined an aqua class at my local pool. This is a great way of exercising and having fun at the same time. Now, 10 months down the track, I have lost 27kg. My confidence is back and I feel so much better about myself. My diabetes is under control (thanks to adjusting my diet), my cholesterol is down (without the aid of medication) and I am eating



#### MARGARET'S TIPS

- *research your individual health condition* and find out everything you can. The more knowledge you have about your condition, the better prepared you are to conquer it.
- *seek support groups* specific to your condition (or your goals) if you possibly can.
- *above all, stick with what works best for you.* It's most definitely worth it.

healthily and enjoying food as well as exercising regularly and enjoying the fresh air at the same time. I no longer crave really sweet things. I also know that if I do eat something too sweet, I won't feel good. So I just don't go there any more. It's not worth it. I watch what I eat and I feel better than ever.

I no longer put butter on toast or potatoes. I don't cook in fat, though I do use a little oil when cooking my fish. I am eating more salads than I used to, as well as fruit and vegetables. It was a real shame that it took such a huge wake-up call for me to do something about my weight, but I'm feeling so much healthier, and I have my confidence back, too.

# Extra information

## Commonly asked questions about diabetes

### Is diabetes hereditary? My mother and grandmother have it so does this mean I will get it?

With type 1 diabetes, the susceptibility is inherited but not the disease itself.

Type 2 diabetes has a significant genetic predisposition so it does tend to run in families. If there is a family history, you can work on reducing your risk factors, such as being overweight or lacking exercise. Have your doctor check your glucose levels on a regular basis.

### Can I still drink alcohol now I have diabetes?

Yes, but in moderation. It will have less impact on your blood glucose levels if you only drink small amounts of alcohol, spread out across the week, rather than having it all at once.

It's also important to eat carbohydrate food when drinking alcohol, to avoid a hypoglycaemic reaction.

### My husband has just been diagnosed. Do I have to cook different meals for him?

The types of meals that are appropriate for your husband are healthy meals for everyone in the family. By adjusting the family meal to accommodate your husband's needs, you will be encouraging your children to develop healthy eating from an early age and it will become a way of life.

## features

# commonly asked QUESTIONS

Nutritionist **Claire Turnbull** answers the questions newly diagnosed people with diabetes most often ask.

### I have been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. Am I right to think this is the 'mild' or less serious type?

The two main types of diabetes are type 1 and type 2. Neither should be considered 'mild' or less serious than the other. They are different.

In **type 1 diabetes**, the immune system destroys the insulin-producing cells of the pancreas. This is known as an autoimmune condition. Insulin is the hormone that helps lower blood glucose levels after eating. If you aren't able to produce insulin, it means your blood glucose levels can get dangerously high. People with

type 1 diabetes, therefore, have to inject insulin to survive. With support and guidance, people with type 1 diabetes can live very normal lives.

In the case of **type 2 diabetes**, the pancreas is either unable to produce enough insulin to manage blood glucose levels, or the pancreas is actually pumping out more insulin than it needs but the body is unable to respond as well to the insulin produced. This is known as insulin resistance. Insulin resistance is often associated with carrying extra weight. Type 2 diabetes might be considered mild because often in the initial stages it can be managed with diet and

exercise. However, type 2 diabetes is progressive, and often people will require medication and eventually possibly insulin to help manage their blood glucose levels. It is important for people with type 2 diabetes to get regular check-ups and look after their eyes and feet as these parts of the body can be affected.

### I have never had a sweet tooth, I don't add sugar to my food or drinks, yet I've got type 2 diabetes. How come?

The amount of sugar in someone's diet doesn't directly affect whether they will develop diabetes or not. Among the risk factors for diabetes are:

- ethnic background. Maori, Polynesians and Asians are more at risk
- being overweight
- having a blood relative with type 2 diabetes
- women who have had a baby weighing more than 4kg (9lbs)
- an inactive lifestyle.

A high-sugar diet is certainly not healthy and may result in someone carrying more weight than is healthy, but it is likely that you are affected by other risk factors from this list which has resulted in your development of diabetes.



### What types of meals can I eat now that I have type 2 diabetes?

When you have diabetes, you are simply looking for healthy balanced meals with plenty of vegetables, and a moderate amount of carbohydrate (about the size of your fist) which are low in fat, especially saturated fat. This type of meal is what anyone who wants a healthy lifestyle aims for. You don't need special meals or try to eat separately from the family provided they are eating healthy meals.

A good guide is the 'ideal plate':

- half plate of low starch vegetables, eg, broccoli, carrots, capsicum, onions, mushrooms
- quarter plate of carbohydrate (palm size), eg, pasta, rice, potatoes, kumara, green banana, yams
- quarter plate protein, eg, meat, chicken, fish, eggs.

If you are eating a 'mixed' meal and

it is difficult to work out whether it fits into the half, quarter, quarter model, above, look at the ingredients in what you are eating and add extra vegetables/salad or a small potato or grainy bread if required. See a dietitian for an individualised eating plan.

### Do I need special foods now that I have diabetes?

Part of managing diabetes is aiming for a healthy, balanced diet. This doesn't mean you need to rush out and buy special 'diabetic foods'.

It is more important to focus on balancing your overall diet and including plenty of vegetables, around two to three pieces of fruit each day (spread throughout the day), whole grains, legumes (such as chickpeas and lentils), low-fat dairy products, lean meat, and fish.

Rather than looking for special items, here are a few tips on normal everyday foods:

- **Bread:** the grainier the better
- **Jam:** just use a scrape. A reduced-sugar jam may be helpful, but is not essential
- **Canned fruit:** go for fruit in natural juice or 'lite' versions
- **Biscuits:** if they are 'sugar-free', they are likely to be high in fat. Go for a healthier snack or have one plain biscuit and call it a day
- **Sauces and dressing:** go for low-fat versions and use in limited amounts
- **Dairy products:** go for reduced-fat options (cottage cheese is great), and use hard cheese (such as edam) sparingly.

Learning how to read food labels is an important step to making everyday healthy food choices. [hfg](#)

Look out for the diabetes-friendly tick on HFG recipes.



for a guide to reading labels, go to [www.healthyfood.com](http://www.healthyfood.com)

# Daily FOOD DIARY

Use this diary to record everything you eat and drink – and how you feel.

A food diary is a powerful tool to make you more aware of your eating habits.



## Hunger/fullness scale

- 1 Ravenous, can't think of anything but food
- 3 Reasonably hungry, thinking a lot about food
- 5 Satisfied but not uncomfortable
- 7 Full and a little uncomfortable
- 10 Stuffed and very uncomfortable

Date .....

Time	Food and drinks consumed	Activity, thoughts or feelings before eating	How hungry were you before eating?

How full were you after eating?	How satisfied were you? Could something else have satisfied you more?	Speed of eating (fast, moderate, slow)

*What I have learnt from the diary*

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*Habits to work on changing*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

*Alternative behaviour for each habit*





1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

# healthyfood

GUIDE

## Weekly meal planner

Week \_\_\_\_\_

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
BREAKFAST 							
LUNCH 							
DINNER 							
SNACKS 							

### Shopping list

PANTRY STAPLES

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

EGGS • DAIRY

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

BOTTLED • CANNED

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

MEAT • FISH • POULTRY

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PRODUCE

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

FROZEN

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

OTHER

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# PANTRY PROBLEM SOLVER

## *meal starter* IDEAS

YOU HAVE	WHAT YOU CAN MAKE
Canned beans, canned tomatoes	<b>Simple bean chilli</b> - serve with rice or tortillas <b>Bean soup</b> - add veges, stock, spices <b>Bean burgers</b> - mash beans and make patties
Rice, onion, stock	<b>Risotto</b> - add leftover vegetables, meat, sausages, parmesan <b>Rice pilaf</b> - add spices, nuts, vegetables
Pasta, onion, canned tomatoes	<b>Tomato pasta sauce</b> - add herbs, garlic, wine, stock, tomato paste <b>Pasta bake</b> - layer in a dish and add cheese, breadcrumbs and any veges you have
Lentils, stock, canned tomatoes	<b>Spicy lentil soup</b> - add garlic, spices, herbs, leftover sausages <b>Dhal (lentil curry)</b> - add curry, yoghurt, chilli spices
Canned tuna, potatoes	<b>Fish cakes</b> - add an egg, lemon juice, breadcrumbs, herbs
Flour or tortillas, tomatoes or tomato paste	<b>Pizza</b> - add cheese, vegetables, meat, herbs
Potatoes, onion	<b>Potato gratin</b> - add milk, breadcrumbs, cheese
Potatoes or kumara, onion, stock	<b>Vege soup</b> - add other veges and your favourite spices and herbs
Coconut milk or evaporated milk, potatoes or kumara	<b>Vege curry</b> - add any other veges you have, fresh or frozen, and curry spices or curry paste

### *Notes*

# The healthy pantry checklist



## BASICS

## EXTRAS

### GRAINS, CEREALS, CRACKERS

- brown rice
- jasmine or basmati rice
- barley
- arborio or risotto rice
- wholemeal pasta
- egg noodles
- wholegrain couscous
- quinoa
- microwaveable pots or pouches of rice, quinoa, etc
- oats
- wholemeal flour
- white flour
- cornflour
- high-fibre breakfast cereal
- wholegrain crackers

- pasta, spaghetti, noodles made from pulses, such as edamame beans, black beans or red lentils
- flour alternatives, eg, spelt, gluten-free
- popping corn

### FRESH FOODS

- onions
- garlic
- root ginger

- chilli peppers
- shallots
- turmeric root

### PULSES - DRIED AND CANNED

- no-added-salt where possible
- red lentils
  - chickpeas
  - red kidney beans
  - split peas

- puy (french) or green lentils
- five-bean mix
- cannelloni beans
- black beans
- chilli beans

### CANNED/PACKAGED FOODS

- salmon, tuna, sardines, etc, in spring water
- no-added-salt tomatoes
- no-added-salt tomato paste
- reduced-salt stock
- reduced-sugar baked beans
- light coconut milk

- beetroot
- corn
- soup
- flavoured tomatoes
- trim milk powder
- UHT trim milk
- curry pastes

### OILS

- extra virgin olive oil
- rice bran or canola oil
- spray or pump oil

- avocado oil
- sesame oil
- peanut oil
- flaxseed oil

## BASICS

## EXTRAS

### SAUCES, SPREADS, CONDIMENTS

- balsamic vinegar
- red/white wine vinegar
- mustard, wasabi, horseradish
- reduced-salt soy sauce
- fish sauce
- reduced-fat mayonnaise
- peanut
- tahini
- yeast spread, eg, marmite, vegemite
- honey
- reduced-sugar jam

- tomato sauce
- Worcestershire sauce
- malt vinegar
- apple cider vinegar
- hoisin sauce
- oyster sauce
- maple syrup

### NUTS, SEEDS, DRIED FRUIT

- almonds
- peanuts
- cashews
- brazil nuts
- pumpkin seeds
- sunflower seeds
- sesame seeds
- raisins, sultanas

- pine nuts
- hazelnuts
- linseeds (flaxseed)
- walnuts
- nut or seed mixes
- dates
- figs
- prunes

### SPICES, HERBS AND SEASONING

- iodised salt
- black pepper
- chilli flakes
- cumin
- cinnamon
- paprika
- curry powder
- mixed herbs
- mixed spice

- oregano
- thyme
- rosemary
- turmeric
- white pepper
- ginger

### DRINKS

- black tea
- green tea
- coffee
- herbal teas

- hot and cold brew iced teas
- decaffeinated tea
- decaffeinated coffee

**healthyfood** GUIDE

First published in *Healthy Food Guide* magazine. For more healthy tips and recipes, go to [healthyfood.com](http://healthyfood.com)  
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# Health check CHART

Photocopy and fill in the chart each week to keep track of your numbers

WEEK ONE	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
Number of standard alcoholic drinks each day							
Number of hours' sleep a night							
Minutes of exercise each day							
Number of cups of fluid consumed each day							

WEEK TWO	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
Number of standard alcoholic drinks each day							
Number of hours' sleep a night							
Minutes of exercise each day							
Number of cups of fluid consumed each day							

WEEK THREE	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
Number of standard alcoholic drinks each day							
Number of hours' sleep a night							
Minutes of exercise each day							
Number of cups of fluid consumed each day							

## WHAT DO WE DO IF THE NUMBERS ARE HIGH?

As well as knowing your numbers, know how to use them. If you get less than positive results after getting tested, talk to your doctor about the next steps. Be prepared to make some changes and try not to worry - worrying may make the problem worse! Stress raises heart rate and blood pressure, and may interrupt your sleep. So set some health goals, seek support if you need it and work towards gradual improvement.