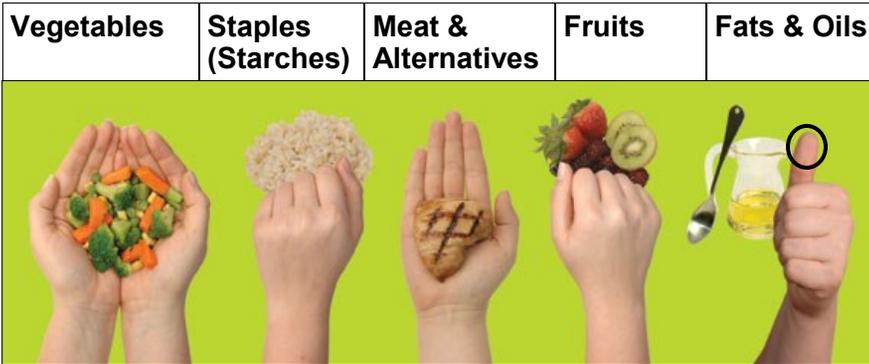


Planning Meals

Controlling portion sizes at meals will help you control blood glucose. You can use the photos on the front of this leaflet as a guide for planning meals. You can also use your hand to estimate portions (see chart below).



How do you know if you've got it right?

Testing blood glucose before eating, and again two hours after eating, can show how specific foods or carbohydrate portions affect your blood glucose levels.

"Finger stick" blood test	Target blood glucose level
Before meal	4.0 - 7.0 (or 70 -130)
2 hours from <u>start</u> of meal	Below 10.0 (or 180)

If the before-meal glucose is higher than 7.0 (or 130) the two hour reading should not increase by more than 3.0 (or 50).

Additional notes:

Nutrition Series



Diabetes

Managing Blood Glucose & Staying Healthy

National Nutrition Centre
 Ministry of Health
 Tel: (246) 427 1693/4
 Email: nutritioncentre@barbados.gov.bb
 Website: nutritioncentre.health.gov.bb

Community Nutrition Officer _____
 Telephone _____

Managing Blood Glucose & Staying Healthy

Diabetes is a condition where the body cannot control glucose (sugar) in the blood properly.

Glucose comes from **carbohydrate (sugars and starches)** in foods and beverages. Controlling the carbohydrate in your diet will help you manage blood glucose levels and stay healthy.

Carbohydrate foods and beverages

FOOD GROUP	EXAMPLE FOODS
Staples (starches)	Bread, biscuits, cereal, corn, cou cou, pasta, ground provisions, rice
Legumes	Dried peas and beans, lentils, nuts
Fruit	Apple, banana, grapes, mango, orange
Milk and dairy	Milk (including low fat), yogurt
Sugars and sweets	Juices, soft drinks, cake, ice cream



Read **Nutrition Facts** labels for **Serving Size** and **Total Carbohydrate**. Pay attention to **saturated fat** and **sodium** as well.

Healthy Eating Tips

Eat three small to moderate meals daily at regular times. Space meals no more than six hours apart. If necessary, include healthy snacks. Do not skip meals.

Eat high fibre foods as they raise blood glucose levels more slowly, lower blood pressure and cholesterol, and help you feel full.

- Use high fibre cereals like oat flakes, whole wheat bread, biscuits and pasta, and brown rice
- Eat provisions like breadfruit, sweet potato and yam
- Make half your plate vegetables and snack on fruits
- Use peas and beans in rice, add them to soups and stews, serve as a side dish or in place of meat

Use less sugar and sugary foods since sugar raises blood glucose levels and can contribute to excess weight.

- **Drink more water**, including with meals. Also try soda water, diet drinks, unsweetened herb teas—hot or iced
- All fruit juices, even unsweetened, contain sugar and should be limited to one serving daily (4oz), if at all

Cut down on fat as **all** types of fat can contribute to excess weight. Excess saturated fat can cause heart disease.

- Bake, boil, grill or steam foods without adding fat
- Try no-stick cooking sprays to sauté and stir-fry
- Limit mayonnaise and salad dressings. Try low fat types
- Choose skimmed or 1% milk, low fat cheese and yogurt
- Eat fish more often, including canned fish (drained). Remove skin from chicken and turkey, trim fat from meat

Keep alcohol to a minimum. It can contribute to excess weight but it can also cause **hypoglycemia** (low blood sugar). If you choose to drink, always eat first and limit yourself to 2 drinks daily for men and 1 drink for women.

Exercise at least 30 minutes daily to lower blood sugar and blood pressure. Exercise can also help you lose weight.