

## Diabetes: Tips for Planning Meals



### Why plan meals ahead?

If you have diabetes, planning meals and snacks with the right balance of carbohydrate, protein, and fat can help you manage your blood sugar.

A balanced diet provides the nutrients your body needs and lowers your risk for heart disease and other problems.

### What plan is right for you?

Work with a dietitian or diabetes educator to find a plan that works for you. Your dietitian or diabetes educator may suggest that you start with carbohydrate counting or the plate format.

- With carbohydrate counting, you plan meals based on the amount of carbohydrate in each food. Spreading carbohydrate throughout the

day helps keep your blood sugar levels within your target range.

- With the plate method, you divide your plate by types of foods. For example, at lunch or dinner you would put vegetables on half the plate, meat or a meat substitute on one-quarter of the plate, and a grain or starchy vegetable (such as brown rice or a potato) on the final quarter of the plate.

### How do you get started?

Plan your meals a week at a time. List your meals on the menu planner on the next page, and then use the shopping list.

- Use cookbooks or online recipes to plan several main meals. Plan some quick meals for busy nights. You also can double some recipes that freeze well, and save half for other busy nights when you don't have time to cook.
- Make sure you have the ingredients you need for your recipes. If you're running low on basic items, put these items on your grocery list too.
- List foods that you use to make breakfasts, lunches, and snacks. List plenty of fruits and vegetables.
- Post this list on the refrigerator.
- Take the list to the store to do your weekly shopping. When you get home, post the menu planner in your kitchen. You may want to write down page numbers from recipe books for quick reference.

| Menu planner |           |       |        |        |
|--------------|-----------|-------|--------|--------|
|              | Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner | Snacks |
| Sunday       |           |       |        |        |
| Monday       |           |       |        |        |
| Tuesday      |           |       |        |        |
| Wednesday    |           |       |        |        |
| Thursday     |           |       |        |        |
| Friday       |           |       |        |        |
| Saturday     |           |       |        |        |

| Grocery list |
|--------------|
|              |

