

Meal Planning Methods to Adapt for Proper Nutrition

Everyone needs proper nutrition to stay healthy, most especially those with existing health conditions like Diabetes. Keep yourself properly nourished by trying any of these meal planning methods that are highly-suggested by experts¹:

METHOD

1

Carb Counting



Monitoring the amount of carbs that you eat and setting a limit for each meal will help you control your blood sugar levels. The amount of carbs that you should intake depends on your lifestyle, medications, usual food intake, physical activity, and medical goals. You may ask your doctor or dietitian about the right amount of carbs that you can eat each day and at each meal.

METHOD

2

Calorie Counting



This method has been used for years by people who are trying to manage their weight. Though this one is recommended for overweight people who do not take Insulin, it is still important to determine your appropriate calorie goal with your dietitian.

METHOD

3

The Plate method

This method is a simple visual way to make sure you get enough non-starchy vegetables (such as broccoli and asparagus) and lean protein foods (such as fish, chicken or beans).² It also helps in limiting the amount of carbohydrate-containing foods that have the most impact on blood sugar levels.

You can start doing it today by filling half of your plate with non-starchy vegetables, one quarter of whole grain or starchy foods, and the remaining quarter with lean protein foods.

1/2 starchy vegetables

1/4 lean protein

1/4 grains or starchy food



9-inch plate



METHOD 4 Portion control

Studies show that people tend to eat more when they are served more food, so getting portions under control is really important for managing weight and blood sugar.

Portion control can help you limit the intake of food that may greatly cause your blood sugar levels to spike. To easily understand this method, below is a handy guide to Portion Control:



METHOD 5 Exchange System

This system groups foods with similar nutritional value into lists with the goal of helping people to eat consistent amounts of nutrients. Each food has approximately the same number of calories, carbohydrates, protein, and fat as the other foods on the same list. Any food on that list can be “exchanged” or traded for any other food on the same list.

Here's a sample Food Exchange list for each food group:

Vegetable Exchange	Fruit Exchange	Milk Exchange	Rice or starch Exchange	Meat Exchange	Fats and sweets Exchange
1/2 cup cooked carrots or 1/2 cup cooked beans or 1 cup salad	1 small apple or 1/2 cup juice or 1/2 grapefruit	1 cup fat-free or low-fat yogurt or 1/2 cup fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk	2 slices of bread or 1 small potato	1 matchbox size meat or 1 egg	1 strip of bacon or 1 teaspoon oil

Your dietitian can provide you with a meal plan based on the exchange system, instructing you as to how many exchanges from each food list you can have for each meal and snack.

Finding the right method that suits you can be a big help, but for those who are finding it hard to keep up with these methods, meal replacement is a good option.

METHOD 6 Meal Replacement

Meal replacements or **MR** are nutritionally-balanced food that contains protein, carbohydrates, fat, vitamins and minerals needed to address specific dietary requirements. People with Type 2 Diabetes are advised to take MR as an alternative to or as part of a diabetic management plan, in order to lose weight and improve their body's insulin sensitivity - helping them to control their blood sugar levels and avoid the risk of more complications.³

To remain healthy at home, it is highly recommended to keep your meals planned and your health in check. Follow these methods and start your way to achieve better health.

