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General Guidelines for Diabetics

- ✓ Eat regular meals.
- ✓ Try to eat your meals and snacks around the same time every day.
- ✓ Try to eat less fat and saturated fats (from animal sources, coconut, or hydrogenated vegetable oils). Use low fat or fat-free dairy products.
- ✓ Avoid intake of foods that use hydrogenated fat as an ingredient (trans fats).
- ✓ When using oil, choose:
 - extra-virgin, first extraction, cold pressed olive (safe up to 375 ° F)
 - avocado, peanut and refined coconut oil (safe up to 450 ° F).
- ✓ Try fat-free toppers (jelly/jam, mustard, salsa, fat-free yogurt or sauces).
- ✓ Sauté with flavored vinegars or lemon/lime juice.
- ✓ Eat more whole grains, vegetables, and fruits.
- ✓ Eat sugars naturally found in fruits and avoid foods with added sugars. These include sugar, brown sugar, syrup, honey, corn syrup, molasses, jam, jelly, marmalade, cookies, baked goods, cakes, pies, candy and regular soft drinks.
- ✓ Try baking, broiling, roasting, or grilling meats using a marinade instead of frying.
- ✓ If eating red meat (includes pork) aim for less than or equal to 16 oz. per week. Choose lean cuts of meat and think of meat more of a side dish, not the main course.
- ✓ Eat skinless poultry and seafood (grilled, broiled or poached).
- ✓ Watch your portion sizes. Sometimes it's not *what* you eat but *how much* you eat that causes weight gain, and elevated glucose or fat levels in the blood. See separate sheet regarding portion sizes.

- ✓ Many of the “dietetic” foods are often higher in fat and calories than regular versions.
- ✓ Be aware that dietetic foods often contain sugar alcohols, which may cause diarrhea (e.g. sorbitol, mannitol and xylitol).
- ✓ If your health-care provider allows you to use alcohol, do so in moderation (no more than 1-2 drinks per week). Never drink on an empty stomach. This could increase your risk of having a low blood sugar reaction.
- ✓ Try to include fruits as part of a meal vs. alone as a snack. Juice and fruits contain natural sugar. Portion sizes are usually ½-cup serving or 1 medium sized fruit. For dried fruit, the portion size is about 2 Tablespoons (size of a golf ball).
- ✓ Some non-caloric sweeteners currently thought to be preferred are stevia/rebiana, erythrotrol and monk fruit.

There is no one diet for diabetes. If the doctor prescribes a set calorie-level diet for you, a Registered Dietitian can individualize a pattern of eating based on your treatment goals, eating habits and lifestyle.

Reviewed by Theresa Shepherd, MS, RD, CDN, CSO 2/2018.