

# NOW WHAT: carb counting

It is important to understand the effect that carbohydrates (carbs) have on your blood sugar levels when you have diabetes.

**FACTS FIRST:** All carbohydrates you eat or drink turn into sugar, which affects your body's blood sugar. **WHAT ARE CARBS?** Carbs are sugars such as natural sugar found in fruit or processed sugars in drinks, sweets, and packaged foods. Starches, a form of carbohydrates, include grains like oats, rice, sweet potatoes, potatoes, beans, and legumes.

Portion Control

Consistency

Flexibility

## ACT ON THE FACTS:

- Setting a maximum amount of carbs before each meal within a well-balanced meal plan and taking diabetes medication can keep your blood sugar from getting too high.
- If you use diabetes medication or insulin, it may be important to eat the same amount of food and carb at the same time each day. Doing this can keep your blood sugar from getting too high or low.
- If your insulin plan includes varying doses based on how much carbs you are eating, accurate carb counting can help you determine how much insulin to take.

## STEPS TO ACTIVATE:

To carb count successfully you will need to identify carbohydrate counting resources.

1. Start by identifying what carbs are.
2. Review how to match your carb intake to your medication amount with your healthcare provider.
3. Monitor your blood sugar along with the amount and type of carb you are eating to learn how they impact your blood sugar.

Seek support from professionals, either your diabetes healthcare team or one of the structured diabetes education courses available. You can learn about courses available in your area by visiting [www.diabetesnowwhat.org](http://www.diabetesnowwhat.org) and clicking on the manage diabetes tab.



Which of your foods and drinks contain carbohydrates? Stop, think, and make a mental note of which foods and drinks will need to be counted.

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**YOU'RE NOT ALONE!**



For more information on how to manage your diabetes, visit:

[DIABETESNOWWHAT.ORG](http://DIABETESNOWWHAT.ORG)