

## What to Eat?

This handout describes what foods to eat and what foods to avoid if you have diabetes.

### What you eat is important

- What you eat changes your blood sugar level
- If your blood sugar is too high for too long, you may
  - Hurt your heart
  - Hurt your kidneys
  - Hurt your eyes or become blind
  - Lose feeling in your feet
- If your blood sugar is too low for too long, you may
  - Pass out
  - Have a seizure

### What to eat

- Eat the same way each day
  - Same time of day
  - Same amount of food
  - Same type of food
- Eat foods you know are OK for you
  - Steam, grill, roast, or stew foods
  - Sugar free or fat free treats
  - Skim or 1% milk
  - Low fat salad dressing
  - Low fat seasonings
    - Herbs, spices, vinegar, or lemon juice
  - Ask how food is cooked and how much fat and sugar is in it

### What NOT to eat

- Fatty and fried foods
- Food cooked in cream sauces or gravy
- Breaded food
- Butter
- Whole or 2% milk
- Alcohol
- High fat salad dressings and mayonnaise
- It is OK to eat some sugar, but eat it with other kinds of foods and do not eat a lot

## What to Eat?

### Plan your meals

- **Food with starch or carbohydrates (carbs)**
  - 6 to 11 servings a day
    - Bread or pasta
    - Corn or potatoes
    - Rice or crackers
    - Tortillas or beans
- **Vegetables**
  - 3 to 4 raw or steamed servings a day
    - Lettuce or greens
    - Broccoli or peppers
    - Carrots or green beans
    - Salsa or vegetable juice
- **Fruit**
  - 2 to 3 raw or cooked servings a day
    - Apples or oranges
    - Bananas or mangos
    - Strawberries or raisins
    - Fruit juices
- **Meat or meat substitutes for protein**
  - 2 servings a day
    - Chicken or fish
    - Eggs or cheese
    - Beef or pork
    - Tofu or peanut butter
- **Milk, cheese, or yogurt**
  - 2 servings a day (do not eat both servings at one time)
    - Low fat or fat free
    - If you are pregnant or breast-feeding, have 4 or 5 servings a day
- **Fats or sweets**
  - 3 to 5 servings a day is OK
    - Fats include oil, butter, salad dressing, olives, avocado, and margarine
    - Sweets include regular soda, cake, pie, cookies, candy, ice cream, jams and jellies

### Keep a record of

- Your meal plan
- Changes to your diet
- Your blood sugar levels