



Diabetes during the Holidays



The holidays are full of food and social interaction with family and friends. No matter how you celebrate the holidays, food is everywhere. Sticking to a specific diet is challenging anytime, but at the holidays, it is even more difficult. Enjoying all the baked treats and heavy meals can have serious consequences for individuals with diabetes. However, being a diabetic does not mean missing the holiday traditions and food. Moderation is key, and there are many healthy festive recipes available, as well as tips for managing carbs.

Counting Carbohydrates

The amount of carbohydrates included in a meal or snack directly affects blood sugar levels and it is important to be aware of the number of carbs eaten. Meal planning which includes carb counting is one way to manage blood sugar (CDC, 2019a). Keeping track of how many carbs consumed at each meal or snack, will help plan for the next meal. A dietitian or nutritionist can determine which foods are best suited to keep blood sugars and A1C's under control. A registered dietitian can help with meal plans and will consider the individual's food preferences. Registered Dietitians can also provide education on food, nutrients, and provide information on how to manage diabetes (Ellis, 2019).

Examples of Carbohydrates

- Grain based foods (bread, pasta, crackers, and cereal).
- Starchy vegetables (potatoes, peas, corn).
- Fruit and juice.
- Milk and yogurt.
- Grains (rice, oatmeal, barley).
- Dried beans (pintos).
- Soy products (veggie burgers).
- Sweets and snack foods (regular soda, juice drinks, cakes, cookies, candy, potato chips) (CDC, 2019a).

App of the Month



The U.S. Department of Agriculture MyPlate App is a free and simple way to set goals for healthy eating. Meet healthy eating goals one at a time! Use the Start Simple with MyPlate App to pick simple daily food goals, see real-time progress, and earn badges along the way. This easy-to-use app can help you make positive changes. Healthy eating can help you achieve a healthier life overall. Get started with Start Simple with MyPlate! (App of the Month is not endorsed by DBHDS Office of Integrated Health. User accepts full responsibility for utilization of app).

References

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- Ellis, E. (2019). How an RDN can help with diabetes. <https://www.eatright.org/health/diseases-and-conditions/diabetes/how-an-rdn-can-help-with-diabetes>
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- Gelbke, J. (2019). This is how I navigate a healthy diabetes-friendly diet during the holidays. <https://www.healthline.com/health/diabetes/navigating-holiday>
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) (n.d.). Recipes: Choose myplate. https://www.choosemyplate.gov/myplatekitchen/recipes?search=&items_per_page=20&sort_bef_combine=search_api_relevance_DESC
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) (2020). Interactive nutrition facts: Dietary fiber. https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/interactivenutritionfactslabel/assets/InteractiveNFL_DietaryFiber_March2020.pdf

Nutrition labels

For diabetics, reading nutrition labels can help control eating and stick with nutrition plan.

1. Check the serving size- many food items are packaged with more than one serving. Do not assume a container is a serving.
2. Calories are important- many individuals have prescribed diets, during the holidays it is easy to lose track of how much is being eaten.
3. Use the %DV on nutrition labels to help with choosing healthier foods. Focus on foods that contain fiber, vitamins, and potassium and calcium. Avoid foods that are high in carbohydrates, sodium, and fats. (USDA, n.d.).

Tips for supporting individuals with diabetes during holiday meals:

1. Be familiar of carb content of favorite foods. This makes counting carbs easier (Gelbke, 2019).
2. If attending parties or holiday dinners frequently, test blood sugar more often. Take extra testing supplies when activities include food (Gelbke, 2019).
3. Keep up the routine- do not skip a meal in order to eat a big meal later. Skipping meals increases the risk of hypoglycemic episodes. Keep a snack handy (Gelbke, 2019).
4. If the party or dinner is at a restaurant, check out the menu before going and have an idea of what is diabetic friendly (Gelbke, 2019).
5. Watch portion size. Don't fall into the "second helping" trap. Holiday meals are heavy on calories and carbs. Stick with eating one portion (Gelbke, 2019).
6. Skip dinner rolls and other heavy foods like gravy and potatoes to save calories and carbs (CDC, 2019b).
7. Offer to bring a dish, and try a new diabetic friendly recipe to share with others (CDC, 2019b).
8. Encourage eating slowly. It takes the brain a few minutes to receive the signal that the stomach is full (CDC, 2019b).
9. Start the meal with healthy vegetables first to knock the edge off of hunger (CDC, 2019b).
10. Encourage exercise and movement. Movement helps to burn the increased carbs and calories consumed (CDC, 2019b).

December 2020



Office of Integrated Health

ABA Snippets

Data Collection is Pivotal for Progress

Data are the lifeblood of behavioral services; indeed, the “primary method for assessing behavior change is through repeated data collection” (Najdowski, Chilingaryan, Bergstrom, Granpeesheh, Balasanyan, Aguilar, & Tarbox, 2009, p. 827). For providers and families, the realities of the dedicated daily efforts required to support an individual that engages in frequent and/or intensive challenging behavior(s) may place data collection on the proverbial ‘back-burner’. While it is understandable that a task such as filling in a data sheet may be outweighed by other pressing demands, all involved in behavioral treatment should be knowledgeable that accurate and reliable data collection is a necessity and paramount for progress. Data collection permits behaviorists to determine the impact of procedures on behaviors of interest (Johnston & Pennypacker, 2009). For those collecting data, please communicate with the individual’s behaviorist if capturing data poses a challenge, so alterations can be made to facilitate more user-friendly data collection methods. Behaviorists should consider the daily demands of the provider/caregivers and loved ones who collect data, so measurement systems are designed towards ease of utility, while also securing data, which fosters an adequate behavioral analysis. Quality data collection promotes well-informed decision making, which in turn bolsters the efforts of all involved in supporting individuals toward habilitation.

References
Johnston, J.M., & Pennypacker, H.S. (2009). *Strategies and Tactics of Behavioral Research: Third Edition*. Routledge.
Najdowski, A.C., Chilingaryan, V., Bergstrom, R., Granpeesheh, D., Balasanyan, S., Aguilar, B., & Tarbox, J. Roane (2009). Comparison of data collection methods in behavioral intervention programs for children with pervasive developmental disorders: A replication. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 42(4), 827-832.

The Wellness Corner

Social Wellness is characterized by having a sense of belonging and connection. Interacting with others is essential to humanity; however, the relationships we have with others need to be supportive and appropriate (1).

Research shows that maintaining an active social life can improve both physical and mental health. These benefits include living longer, enjoying better physical health, maintain better mental health and may reduce the risk of dementia (2). These benefits are connect to your overall well-being.

This dimension of Wellness effects everyone. During these unusual times, the way to maintain and nurture our Social well-being has required that we adopt new approaches that will keep us safe while staying connected. When this aspect of your well-being is not nurtured, the outcome can be experiencing a sense of loneliness (3). Developing and expanding the ways in which you communicate, interact and support those within your social network is more important than it has ever been.

Another part of social wellness is our valued roles such as friend, worker, volunteer, student, colleague, parent, spouse, and community member. These roles provide an identity, drive our daily activities, and ignite our passions (4).

If you have any questions or ideas on Wellness, please feel free to contact:

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References
(1) <https://www.healthiestbest.com/benefits-of-social-wellness>
(2) Benefits of Social Wellness: Published by Joshua Thurston on April 12, 2020
(3) Angela K. Troyer Ph.D., C.Psych. "The Health Benefits of Socializing." *Psychology Today*; June 30, 2020
(4) Step by Step: [https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmhas/...](https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmhas/)



Upcoming Training Registration Links

Fatal Seven Caregiver training sessions:

- Thursday December 10, 2020 between 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Register in advance at: <https://dbhds.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJltceGvpzwpE-DM17AqzeyCWJd16-nx5Zc>

- Tuesday January 12, 2021 between 1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Register in advance at: <https://dbhds.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJltcuGqrTwpH8mFHI90Z6ODGLydtMX75KM>

Skin Integrity Caregiver training session:

- Tuesday December 8, 2020 between 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Register in advance at: https://dbhds.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJlIsfuqvrjgtHhWmt_WuKFI1u_J_dYOZDIQ

VDH Special Needs Oral Health Training for Caregivers training sessions:

- Tuesday December 15, 2020 between 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Register in advance at: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEtceuhpjkGtMeqUfBPerv7OWfXJzZg7J7>

- Tuesday January 26, 2021 between 10:00am – 12:00pm

Register in advance at: https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwrdeiorT4uHt1KmUgKqzI2A4x4E32uEq_x

After you register and are approved to attend, you will receive a confirmation email with a link to join the training on the day of the course. If the course capacity has been met, you will receive an email with an alternate course date. So register early!

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