

Diabetes-Friendly Breakfast

If you have recently been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes and you are wondering what is the best and healthy breakfast that can keep you well energized for the best part of the morning hours, well, sit down and do not stress anymore because we have the answers to your queries.

Everybody (diabetic or not) knows that they need to eat a well-balanced diet. And as always, the challenge is figuring out what and how much of it to include on your plate. And for diabetics, certain foods can raise your blood sugar more easily.

So, what should a type-2 diabetic eat for breakfast?

Before we get to that it is important to acknowledge that in the morning, everyone gets a slight rise in blood sugar levels. If you are not diabetic, you may not realize it, but for type 2 diabetics this can be worrisome, especially if the rise is too high. Sometimes, they may have to seek medication.

Why does this happen?

- 1) The dawn phenomenon.

Your body knows that you need the energy to carry on a day's activity. So early in the morning, say between 3:00 am to 8:00 am, the liver starts to break down sugar stores. This then leads to an increase in blood sugar making the pancreas produce insulin. But then, the cells get a little bit more resistant to insulin during the morning hours.

- 2) Somogyi Phenomenon

After you take your insulin medication at night, your blood sugar should stabilize. But in some cases, your blood sugar levels may fall sharply triggering hormones that work against insulin and thus a higher blood sugar level in the morning.

- 3) Your choice of breakfast.

After breakfast, the blood sugar tends to shoot up to two times higher than after lunch. Postprandial high blood sugar results in cravings for carbohydrates. This is because the sugar tends to stay in the bloodstream instead of going into the cells. Therefore, eating a lower-carb breakfast minimizes the resulting glucose response and your blood sugar will be better balanced throughout the day.

What to eat for breakfast?

Research shows that eating higher fat and moderate protein breakfast may play a big role in reducing A1C, weight, and fasting blood sugar. Your plate should have a little bit of these major food groups.

1) Carbohydrates

Carbs are an excellent source of energy, but they can send blood sugar spiraling. When it comes to a diabetic-friendly diet, fiber is the real deal. Go for wholegrain foods because they break down slowly and help you stay full longer. This means you are not as likely to overeat and spike your blood sugar. You can try oatmeal, avocado toast on whole-grain bread, or a whole-grain waffle, amaranth, barley, etc. Keep watch on the portions- about 40g to 60g of carbohydrates per meal.

2) Proteins

Meats, poultry, dairy, and fish

Like fiber-rich carbohydrates, proteins are slow to digest as well. Try fish, skinless turkey & chicken breasts, sausages, tofu, low fat/skimmed milk, low-fat yogurt, and eggs. To boost your intake while staying low with carbohydrates, you can try a protein powder smoothie.

Beans and legumes

If you do not eat meat, beans and other legumes are excellent sources of dietary fiber and protein. They are slow to digest, meaning they can prevent overeating, blood sugar spikes, and aid in weight loss. So, try black beans, chickpeas, lentils, and kidney beans.

The recommended protein intake should be about 0.8 to 1g/kg of body weight for diabetics.

3) Fats

Not all fats are bad for you, so do not ever shy away from fats because they help with vitamin absorption, hormone production, and heart and brain function.

Limit saturated and trans fats to about 15g (These result from animal products such as the skin of turkey, chicken and poultry, dairy products, cheese and butter, coconut, and palm oils). Look for monounsaturated fats which come from olive oil, nuts, seeds, peanut butter, and avocado. Omega 3 fatty acids found in fish, soybeans, walnuts, and flaxseeds are also good fats. Do not over-indulge though. Say about 20-30% of your daily calorie intake should be fats.

In a nutshell, always have a food plan in place to help you save time as well as prevent you from making food choices that might spike the blood sugar in a very short time while also affecting your glucose control later during the day.

If you need help with your diet, work with your doctor, a certified diabetes educator, or a nutritionist to find your personalized macronutrient ratio. Please contact us with any comments or questions.

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