

Diet

The diet for people with lipodystrophy and diabetes is a balanced healthy diet, the same kind that is recommended for the rest of the population – low in fat, sugar and salt, with plenty of fruit and vegetables and meals including some starchy foods, such as bread, potatoes, cereals, pasta and rice.

Eating for diabetes isn't about going on a diet. It's about making small, healthy changes to make your eating habits more balanced.

One or two high fat, sugar or salty foods won't undo all your good

work. Balancing your diet when you are diagnosed with diabetes can be challenging. Although the food choices you make and your eating habits are important in helping you manage your diabetes, you should be able to continue enjoying a wide variety of foods as part of healthy eating. Eating a balanced diet, managing your weight, and following a healthy lifestyle, together with taking any prescribed medication and monitoring where appropriate will benefit your health enormously.

All breakfast cereals are fine. The best choices for your diabetes control and for satisfying your appetite include varieties like porridge, branflakes, all bran and fruit 'n' fibre. Add semi skimmed or skimmed milk, and try adding fruit to notch up a portion towards your five-a-day target early in the day. You can use any fruit and it can be fresh, frozen, stewed, canned or dried.

Bread, toast, bread muffins and crumpets are a good alternative to cereal. All are fine but wholegrain and granary versions are better for your diabetes control and may make you feel fuller for longer. Choose a low fat spread or one based on monounsaturated fat such as Bertolli or Mono or supermarkets own brands. Ordinary jams and marmalades or reduced sugar versions are okay too.

Making time for lunch helps you to ensure that you spread your food out over the day. This is good for controlling your appetite as well as your diabetes. Lean meat, fish, eggs, beans, pulses, soups and salads are all good choices. Try these with granary bread, toast, pitta bread, jacket potatoes, pasta or rice.

For a better balance try adding some extra salad and follow lunch with a piece of fruit or a low fat or diet yogurt.

Try to have a balanced main meal every day. Using your plate as a rough guide will help you to eat foods in the recommended proportions. Remember – if you are trying to lose weight the sizes of your portions may need to change – check for more specific advice with your dietician.

Low-fat diet is advised for patients with hypertriglyceridemia. Regular exercise and weight loss may reduce the chances of developing diabetes and dyslipidemia and are useful when these conditions are established. Children with lipodystrophies should be allowed to consume adequate calories to allow for proper growth and nutrition.

Saturated fats

These are mainly found in the harder fats such as the fat on meat, lard, and the fat in dairy products such as butter, full cream milk, etc. There are also fats called 'Trans Fats' (Hydrogenated Vegetable Oils). These are oils which come from vegetables but have been processed to make them hard and similar to saturated fats. They are often used in processed foods, and in commercially made cakes, biscuits and pastries.

We should try to limit our intake of saturated fats and trans fats as they contribute to weight gain and a raised cholesterol level.

Unsaturated fats

These mainly come from vegetables, nuts and fruits. They are divided into:

- Polyunsaturated fats such as sunflower oil, and corn oil.
- Monounsaturated fats such as olive oil and rapeseed oil.
- Omega 3 fatty acids. These come mainly from oily fish such as pilchards, sardines, salmon mackerel and fresh (not tinned) tuna. Some omega 3 fatty acids are found in various plant foods and vegetable oils.

Unsaturated fats are 'good fats' as they are less likely to raise your cholesterol level. Omega 3 fatty acids are also thought to help prevent heart disease and may help to improve our health in other ways.

Food labels

Foods that contain fat often contain a mixture of saturated and unsaturated fats. Food labels often list the amounts of each type of fat in the food (or at least how much of the fat in the food is saturated). As a rule, we should aim to limit our intake of saturated fats, and when we use fats and oils, to mainly choose those high in unsaturates. Food labels also show how many calories are in the food. So, it may be a good idea to get into the habit of reading food labels when you

shop.