

## **3 Delicious Food Tips for Diabetes: How to Modify Your Diet Plan**



By Jackie Newgent, 03/06/2014

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My dad has type 2 diabetes. So I think about diabetes often—especially since I'm at higher risk for developing it. While we can't really change our genes, we *can* change our diet.

Managing a healthy weight, eating right, and being active can help ward off diabetes. But for some, that diagnosis will become a reality. When diagnosed, one of the first things you'll hear is that you'll need to adjust your diet. The initial assumption is that you can't enjoy sweets or your favorites anymore. Luckily, there's flexibility in a diabetes eating plan, which absolutely does include deliciousness.

Try these strategies to help keep blood sugar in check while savoring every bite.

### Fill Half of Your Plate with Vegetables



your plate.

Great news! Vegetables can go on your “eat more of” list, specifically non-starchy varieties like asparagus, broccoli, eggplant, mushrooms, peppers, and leafy greens. Along with nutritional goodness, vegetables add visual appeal and natural savoriness to meals for so few calories.

Try this: serve veggies as entrées more often, like an eggplant “steak” or vegetarian burrito. Pile sandwiches high with raw or grilled veggies. Or simply arrange a leafy green salad onto half of

### Go for Whole Grains



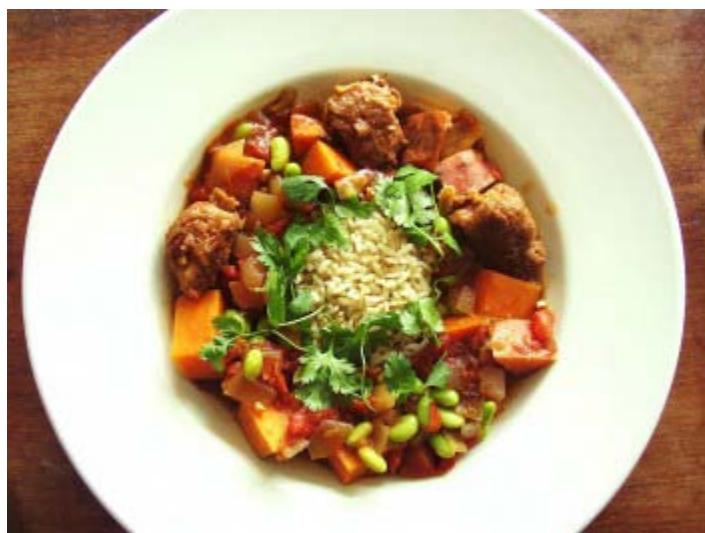
bread or whole grain pasta. Before you know it, eating whole grains will become second nature.

Processed “white” foods, including white bread, can contribute to weight gain and higher blood sugar levels. But don’t eliminate bread, cereal, rice and pasta; rather give them a whole grain makeover. Whole grains help boost dietary fiber and satisfaction.

Gradually aim for all grain selections to be whole. These choices include straightforward grains, such as brown rice and whole oats, as well as foods made from them, like whole-wheat

Though nutrient rich, be sure to spread whole grain intake throughout the day and don’t overdo it. This is important for managing total carbohydrate intake. To prevent overindulgence, stir (or sneak!) vegetables into your whole grain picks. For instance, toss pasta with equal amounts of sautéed vegetables. I bet you’ll find it tastier, too.

## Be Generous with Flavor



The best way to keep following a healthful eating plan is to make sure you enjoy it. Go big on “real” ingredients that create scrumptiousness for practically zero calories.

Choose spices, fresh herbs, and citrus zest (freshly grated peel) often. Kick up flavors 1/4 teaspoon of spice at a time. Try cinnamon with savory foods; it adds intriguing sweetness and may play a role in managing blood sugar levels. Add fresh herbs just before serving.

Consider doubling parsley, basil, mint, or cilantro suggested in a recipe. And sprinkle lemon, lime, or orange zest onto a meal for color and tang. Try lemon zest with Italian dishes, lime zest with Mexican food, and orange zest with Asian entrées.

Remember: Everyone has unique needs. Your best bet is to visit a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN), specializing in diabetes, that can develop an individualized diet plan. To find a registered dietitian nutritionist, go to <http://www.eatright.org/programs/rdfinder/>.

Photo Credit: Jackie Newgent, RDN, CDN

### Author Bio

Jackie Newgent, RDN, CDN, is a New York City-based chef, registered dietitian nutritionist, and media personality. She's the author of *The With or Without Meat Cookbook*, *1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes*, *Big Green Cookbook*, and the award-winning *The All-Natural Diabetes Cookbook*. Jackie is a recreational culinary instructor at the Institute of Culinary Education, a frequent contributor to *Everyday with Rachael Ray* and *Coastal Living* magazines, and a freelance recipe developer for Food Network. She's a past national media spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics. Jackie's unique recipe makeovers can be found on her blog, "tasteovers by jackie."

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