

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AT DIAGNOSIS

Will my relationship with food change?

Yes - in that you have to be aware of what foods contain carbohydrates, what you eat between meals, plan and be organised regarding food and be able to count carbohydrates in foods. Most high sugar foods can be swapped for an alternative or a homemade version. If you are missing certain foods, speak to the dietitian to help find a solution.

This pack contains information on positive relationships with food. You can also discuss this with your Dietitian.

Do I have to follow a special diabetes diet?

No – having Type 1 diabetes means you just need to follow a healthy, balanced diet with a good variety of foods in portion sizes appropriate to you

Should I eat ‘diabetic’ products?

No, diabetic products contain sweeteners that may cause diarrhoea and can still raise blood glucose and they are hard to carb count as only half of the carbs are digested.

What can I use instead of sugar?

Use fruit in recipes and breakfast cereal, Sweeteners such as xylitol in recipes. Ask us for more information.

What if I want a snack between meals?

If you choose a carb free snack or fruit like a satsuma, a plum or a small handful of berry fruits then you don't need insulin. If you want a carb snack then carb count it and give insulin. Try not to do this every day.

Do I have to eat my meals at the same time everyday?

No but a 4 hour gap between meals and insulin is ideal as insulin lasts for 4 hours in the body. Diabetes likes routine but don't let it rule your life.

What if I don't want to eat any carbs at my meal?

You need carbs for energy and growth but on the odd occasion you don't want to eat carbs, you would still check BG in case you need correction insulin

What if I don't eat all my meals?

If you can eat your carbohydrate portion that would be great. If you have carb counted for 30g and you only eat 15g then you need to eat/drink something else to make up the carbs or you may have a hypo

What if I've eaten my meal but I'm still hungry?

You can have seconds of the protein and veg or you could have more carbs but would need to calculate the carbs and give more insulin. Do not give more correction insulin.

Can I have my insulin after meals?

Insulin only works if you give it before food. The ideal is 15 minutes before but this is not always practical as you might not know your carb portion.

What if I'm hungry at bedtime?

Bedtime is not the best time to eat as you are just going to go to sleep.

If your BG is less than 7mmol (but not hypo) then we recommend you have a snack containing 15g carbs but no rapid insulin, eg slice of toast. This is in case your background insulin needs to change. Once your background is correct you will probably be able to go to sleep if your is over 5mmol without a snack.

If your BG is above 7mmol, then have a carb free snack. If you want a snack containing carbs then you will need to give insulin but less than you would give during the day in case you have a hypo.

Can I still have a school dinner?

Yes, the primary school menus are carb counted. At high school you will need to guesstimate the carbs and then reflect back to see if it worked. If you went high or hypo after then change the carbs you estimated for that meal. Take photos if you can to help you get the carb counting accurate. We are here to help.

Can I have cake on my birthday?

Yes, but try and have cake with cream and fruit instead of buttercream, icing sugar and jam. You could use xylitol in the recipe if you make your own.

What can I eat around celebration times?

If you eat sweet foods during celebrations, have a small amount and as part of your meal and make sure you carb count and give insulin. Please see the Digibete app for recipe and celebration ideas which have been fully carb counted.

How do I carb count when I eat out?

You will have to use your experience of previous meals, handy visual measures, carbs and calcs book/app when eating out of the house. Some restaurants will have counted the carbs for you and be available online so you can plan your meal in advance. Use your reflecting skills – check your BG 2hrs after your guesstimate to see if you were on target. Make a note so you can be more confident with your guesstimate next time. We are not aiming for perfection, try your best and enjoy eating out!

Buffets and 'All you Can Eat' restaurants – choose your first plate of food, carb count and give insulin for that meal. If you would like to go back for more food and don't want to give extra insulin, choose carb free options like salad, vegetables, uncoated meat, chicken, fish or cheese. If you are still hungry and want more carbohydrate foods, carb count for the carbs but do not check your BG as you do not need a correction dose.

3 course meals – you will need to carb count, and give insulin, for each separate course. However, do not check blood glucose (BG) for the 2nd and 3rd course as you do not need a correction dose for the additional courses.

What can I eat at sleepovers?

Take carb free snacks with you so you can eat them freely through the night without you having to think about diabetes. Any snacks containing carbs could be collected together and insulin given. Use the MyLife app to calculate insulin doses. Find out what the foods plans are before you go so you can be prepared. You can send pictures to your parents to help you carb count the food if you are unsure.

How do I carb count recipes?

Any recipe can be carb counted from the ingredients and then divide the total by the portions/number of people eating. We are here to help.

Will my weight change?

You might have lost weight before diagnosis. You will regain any lost weight now your diabetes is being managed. You may be feel more hungry in the few weeks following diagnosis and this is expected and will go back to normal. Try to fill up at mealtimes and avoid large snacks. Your weight will be monitored in clinic every 3 months. Ask your Dietitian if you have any worries or concerns.

Can I still do the sport/exercise that I enjoy?

Yes, BG may go up or down with activity so find out what yours does and we can work round it by reducing insulin or adding in carbs – please see our exercise and activity leaflet. Have food, fluid, insulin and blood glucose checking equipment with you.

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