

WHAT IS DIABETES?

Diabetes is a syndrome characterized by the elevated level of blood glucose due to deficiency of insulin hormone excreted from the pancreas or the decreased insulin action.

Foods are broken down into glucose after digestion so that they can be absorbed in the blood stream and increase the level of glucose in the blood. In healthy individuals, the insulin released from the pancreas transports glucose to the cells.

Diabetics cannot transfer glucose to the cells, either because they suffer from insulin deficiency or the insulin is inefficient. This leads to a high blood glucose level.

When the blood glucose level increases and is above the normal range, glucose is excreted with the urine. Thus, resulting in polyuria and polydipsia, and drinking too much water.

Diabetics should learn about balanced and adequate nutrition for their health.

TYPES OF DIABETES

Type 1 Diabetes is the deficient production of insulin in the body or total lack production.

Type 2 Diabetes is when the body produces insulin, but fails to use the insulin efficiently.

DIABETICS SHOULD KNOW;

Which foods contain sugar?

Sugar from sweets such as table sugar, bonbons, jams, honey, chocolate, traditional desserts, and concentrated fruit juice with additional sugar, cakes, and sweetened carbonated drinks are converted into glucose and quickly absorbed; causing sudden increases in the blood glucose levels. Avoiding these foods help to prevent fluctuations of blood glucose levels.

Which foods contain starch

Bread, rice, pasta, potatoes, flour, corn, and legumes contain starch that is broken down as glucose. The starch molecules are converted into glucose slowly, therefore blood glucose increases gradually. Starchy foods that contain dietary fibers such as whole grain bread, bulgur, and legumes increase glucose levels slower in comparison to refined foods such as white bread, potatoes, rice etc.

DIABETICS SHOULD KNOW THE FOLLOWING;

How do we increase the fiber content of the diet?

- Diabetics should consume whole grain bread, bulgur, and fresh fruits instead of respectively, white bread, rice, concentrated and sugar added fruit juices.
- They should eat fruits, if possible without peeling the skin.
- They should eat fresh vegetables and salad with each meal.
- Legumes should be eaten frequently.

How many times a day do we need to eat?

- Diabetics should eat each meal at the recommended time and amount to prevent fluctuations of blood glucose levels. Skipping meals and not eating for a long time is dangerous for patients' health. Diabetics' diets and meal times should be planned by health professionals.
- Diabetics should increase their physical activity through regular exercises such as jogging, cycling, swimming, gardening, and etc.

Avoid these in your diet;

- Table sugar and other sweets such as honey, jam, syrup, and chocolate
- Cookies, cakes, white bread, sugar added carbonated beverages and fruit juices
- Margarine, butter and foods rich in fat
- Salami, sausage, bacon, and dried meat
- Offal such as liver, brain, etc.
- All fried foods
- Foods rich in salt such as olives, pickles and canned foods



The diet should be planned by a dietician, taking into consideration body weight, height, physical activity, and socio-economical level and nutritional habits of the individuals and should be customized.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Do not skip meals. Meals should be eaten at certain times and amounts.
- Prefer poultry and fish.
- Do not add extra oil or butter while cooking meat.
- Prefer oil to butter or margarine while cooking.
- Choose cooking methods such as boiling, grilling, and baking instead of frying.
- Your body weight should be monitored.



Healthy
Lifestyle



THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH
General Directorate of Primary Health Care
Department of Nutrition and Physical Activity

Healthy Nutrition
Series Number: 18

DIABETES and NUTRITION

