

# Low carbohydrate diet

An introduction for people with diabetes



## Information for patients Dietetics - Diabetes

A low carbohydrate diet is a strict plan which means having less than 50g of carbohydrate (carbs) each day. This is much less than people usually eat, so it can help you to lose weight and improve your blood glucose. To follow this diet, you swap starchy carbs and fruit for vegetables, protein foods and healthy fats.

**How long can I follow this diet for?** You can follow this diet for up to 12 weeks, then gradually add small portions of carbs back in to your diet.

**What support will I receive?** After your assessment appointment with a dietitian, you may be offered a follow up appointment if needed. After the 12 weeks of a low carb approach, you may want to attend a 'Carbohydrate Awareness' workshop which will provide you with more information on the next step.

**How will this diet benefit me?** This diet can help you to lose weight and improve your blood glucose. It can help you to tune back into signs of hunger and fullness, and to adjust to smaller portions of carbs.

**Is this diet suitable for me?** This can be a big change to the way you usually eat. You may find it is a more expensive way of eating and it may not fit in with the way the rest of your family eat. However, if you enjoy vegetables, protein foods, healthy fats and are happy to restrict carbs, this may work well for you.

**Are there any foods I should avoid?** You will be having very small amounts of carbs. This means limiting the following foods:

- starchy carbohydrates e.g. bread, rice, pasta, potatoes, cereals, food made with flour
- sugar and foods containing sugar e.g. full sugar fizzy drinks, sweets, chocolates, biscuits, etc
- fruit e.g. fresh fruit, tinned fruit, dried fruit and fruit juice
- milk, milk drinks and yoghurt

You should try to avoid snacking and alcohol as well, as this will also help you control your weight.

**What can I eat and drink?** You should base your meals around meat (or meat alternatives), fish, cheese, eggs, vegetables, and nuts. You can drink tea and coffee with small amounts of milk, diet or zero drinks and no added sugar cordial.

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## Where can I get further information?

- 'Carbohydrates and Diabetes' leaflet from Sheffield Teaching Hospitals
- [www.lowcarbprogram.com](http://www.lowcarbprogram.com) Subscription £14.99 a month or £69.99 per year

**Important notes:** If you are taking **gliclazide** tablets or **insulin** injections you must receive advice from a diabetes nurse or your GP about checking your blood glucose more often and your medication doses before starting this diet. This will help to prevent hypoglycaemia (a low blood glucose).

## Sample menu plans

Drink plenty of water and sugar free drinks such as tea, coffee, sugar-free cordials and diet or zero drinks. You can use up to 200ml of milk per day e.g. in cups of tea and coffee which will provide 10g of carbs.

| Meal         | Food and amount                                    | Carbs |
|--------------|--|-------|
| Breakfast    | Mushroom omelette and grilled tomatoes             |       |
| Snack        | 80g of blueberries and 100g fat free Greek yoghurt | 14g   |
| Lunch        | Olive and feta salad with 2 egg-sized new potatoes | 20g   |
| Evening meal | Bolognese with spiralised courgettes               |       |

| Meal         | Food and amount  | Carbs |
|--------------|--|-------|
| Breakfast    | 1 slice of toast and full fat spread with 2 poached eggs             | 15g   |
| Snack        | Carrot and pepper sticks with salsa                                  |       |
| Lunch        | Tuna mayo lettuce wraps<br>80g apple, cinnamon and pecan fruit salad | 15g   |
| Evening meal | Oven baked salmon with tomato and avocado salad                      |       |

| Meal         | Food and amount  | Carbs |
|--------------|--|-------|
| Breakfast    | 200g full-fat Greek yoghurt, nuts, 80g raspberries                                       | 17g   |
| Snack        | Tomato, mozzarella and basil   |       |
| Lunch        | Vegetable soup with 1 medium slice of bread and full fat spread<br>Small handful of nuts | 15g   |
| Evening meal | Chicken stir-fry and cauliflower rice  |       |

Diabetes Centre telephone numbers: Northern General Hospital: **0114 271 4445**  
Royal Hallamshire Hospital: **0114 271 3479**



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