

Diabetes Dinner

A healthful, balanced, delicious, and quick dinner will help you feel energized through the evening without reaching for candy or ice cream. You'll sleep better and wake up in the morning with a lower blood sugar level – two benefits that help you start off the next day feeling great. **Here's how to make dinner work for you:**

1. Keep a plate of low-carbohydrate raw veggies like red or green bell pepper, cucumber, and baby carrots ready-to-go in the fridge to **snack on while you're preparing dinner**. For a dip, use plain Greek yogurt instead of sour cream, or try guacamole or hummus for a satisfying snack that takes the edge off your hunger.



2. **Enjoy 12-16 ounces of water before you start eating** dinner. Drinking water before meals has been shown to decrease the amount of food consumed during the meal.

3. **Plan dinner around a palm-sized portion of lean protein** such as skinless chicken or turkey, fish, or seafood. These types of protein foods help you feel more satisfied without raising your blood sugar levels.

4. **Enjoy plant sources of protein** that are naturally lower in fat and good sources of fiber such as dried beans and peas. Think lentils, kidney beans, pinto beans, black beans, and split peas. Be sure to read the label to account for the carbohydrates in these foods.

5. Plan to **fill half your plate with a variety of vegetables** that are raw or cooked. Frozen vegetables are ready in a snap using the microwave, and you can also incorporate vegetables into pasta sauce, soups, or casseroles.

6. To manage blood sugar levels, **keep the portion of starchy vegetables** like potatoes, corn, peas, and winter squash, and starchy grains like pasta, bread, or rice to **no more than one cup**.

7. **Double recipes for later use**. In the time it takes to prepare one meal, you can double the recipe and have another meal ready to go. Instead of relying on purchased frozen meals, you'll have your own homemade meals ready in the freezer for busy nights.

8. **Keep dinner simple:** a sandwich, raw vegetables, and a piece of fruit are just as healthful and balanced as a gourmet meal.

9. If you enjoy ending dinner with something sweet, **choose a small portion of something delicious with about 15 grams of carbohydrate**. A half cup of fresh berries topped with 1 tablespoon whipped cream, or 1 ounce of dark chocolate with at least 70% cacao are two sweet dessert options. The key with dessert is a small portion that you eat slowly and mindfully, savoring each delicious bite.

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