Diabetes is a disease where your body cannot properly store and use food for energy. The fuel that your body needs is called glucose (sugar). Glucose comes from foods such as fruit, milk, some vegetables, starchy foods and honey, syrup, candy and table sugar.

**What is Blood Glucose?**
Blood glucose (sugar) is the amount of glucose in your blood at a given time.

To control your blood glucose you will need to eat healthy foods, be active and take your diabetes pills and/or insulin.

**Tips for Healthy Eating**
- Eat three meals per day at regular times and space meals no more than six hours apart. You may benefit from a healthy snack. Eating at regular times helps to prevent fluctuating blood sugar levels.
- Limit sugars and sweets such as table sugar, regular pop, fruit juice, desserts, candies, jam and honey. Eating or drinking high sugar foods will raise your blood sugar level. Artificial sweeteners such as Equal®, Splenda®, or Sugar twin® can be helpful.
- Include fruits and vegetables with your meals as they are very high in nutrients and a good source of fibre. If you are on potassium restricted diet, choose fruits and vegetables from the lower potassium group.
- Buy canned fruit packed in water or juice. Drain and throw away juice.
- Limit the amount of high fat food you eat such as fried food, chips and pastries. High fat food may cause weight gain. A healthy weight helps with blood glucose control and a healthier heart.
- Add physical activity to your life. Regular physical activity will improve your blood glucose control. Talk to your doctor about what activity is safe for you.
- If you are thirsty drink water, diet soft drinks (lower phosphorus ones), coffee or tea. Try to avoid fruit juice, regular pop or other beverages that are high in sugar.

*Adapted from Canadian Diabetes Associations -- Just the Basics*

**Sample Menu**

**Breakfast**
- ½ cup cold cereal with ½ cup blueberries
- ½ cup milk
- 1 slice *toast
- 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- Tea/coffee/water

**Lunch**
- 1 sandwich with homemade soup (2 slices *bread, lean chicken/meat/fish, and 1 tsp non hydrogenated margarine)
- ½ cup sliced cucumber or tossed salad
- ½ cup grapes
- Tea/coffee/water

**Dinner**
- 1 small boiled potato
- ½ cup vegetables
- 1 *small dinner roll
- 1 tsp non-hydrogenated margarine
- Lean meat/chicken/fish
- ½ cup strawberries
- Tea/coffee/water

**Evening Snack**
- 1 small homemade muffin or ½ *sandwich

* 60% whole wheat, light rye, & white bread

To be used in conjunction with advice from a Registered Dietitian.
**Why Check Your Blood Sugars?**

1. It provides a quick measure of your blood sugars.
2. It can help determine if you have high blood sugars or low blood sugars.
3. It can help you and your health care team decide if you need to make changes in your diet or medication.

**Blood Sugar Testing**

- A blood glucose meter is used to test your blood glucose at home.
- Talk with your doctor, diabetes educator or pharmacist about which meter is best for you.

**Blood Sugar Targets** vary depending on a person’s age, medical condition and other risk factors. Ask your doctor what your blood sugar targets should be.

**What is A1C?**
This is a blood test that measures an average of your blood sugar levels over the past 120 days (3 months).

It can help you and your health care providers know when you need to make adjustments in your diet or medications.

**Blood Sugar Targets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A1C</th>
<th>Blood sugar before meals</th>
<th>Blood sugar two hours after meals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Targets for most People with diabetes</strong></td>
<td>≤ 7.0%</td>
<td>4.0 to 7.0</td>
<td>5.0-10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Normal Range</strong></td>
<td>≤ 6.0%</td>
<td>4.0 to 6.0</td>
<td>5.0-8.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Canadian Diabetes Associations Resources