

# DIET IN DIABETES MANAGEMENT

Once you are diagnosed with Diabetes, you enter a phase of dilemma about what to eat and what not to eat...!

Having a healthy diet is one of the key aspects of managing diabetes and preventing undue consequences. Even when you have to take medicines to manage blood sugars, a healthy diet is a must for positive outcomes.



The following FAQs may help you crack the code regarding a healthy diet in Diabetes:

## Does a person with diabetes require some special foods?

A person with diabetes can eat any food item provided it is within the permissible calorie limits based on his/her height, weight, sex, age, activity level and medications. The goal is to keep a check on blood sugars which may delay long term adverse outcomes and improve the quality of life.

You can take help from a registered dietician and your doctor.

## Does a person with diabetes need to consume the same food item every day to have a good calorie count?

No, a person with diabetes can eat almost all foods, fruits and vegetables if consumed in appropriate amounts.

To know about appropriate amount, you can follow exchange lists. Each exchange list contains foods that are alike; each food choice on a list contains about the same amount of carbohydrate, protein, fat, and calories as the other choices on that list.

## Is a person with diabetes allowed to eat sweets?

Yes, one can occasionally replace some carbohydrates in diet with a sweet. Do not do this daily as sugary foods do not have the nutrients, vitamins and minerals for a healthy body. Consult your doctor or dietician on how you can make this adjustment while keeping blood sugars in check.

## Are there some super foods which help in managing diabetes?

There is a group of vegetables which is good for everyone including people with diabetes as they are very low in calories and very rich in nutrients. These include non-starchy vegetables like bottle gourd, eggplant, peppers, tomatoes, green beans, cabbage, lady finger, cauliflower, broccoli, zucchini and all green vegetables. Amongst them, few vegetables like Bitter gourd (karela), Fenugreek (methi), Indian blackberry (jamun), Garlic, Flax seed, Cinnamon which are believed by some as treatment options for diabetes but evidence is bleak. While, these are good for people with diabetes but they cannot be a substitute for medicine. Please take care not to destroy the beneficial effects of these super foods by over cooking or deep frying.

## Here are a few tips which can help you manage a healthy diet:

- Diet which is natural and high in fibre helps all, including people with diabetes. Fibre keeps blood glucose from spiking up after a meal by slowing down the speed at which food is digested. This is why brown rice is better than white rice or whole wheat flour is better than maida/white flour
- Have small and frequent meals. Avoid overeating
- Limit consumption of sugars, sweets, desserts, candies, jams, honey
- Limit consumption of refined, processed and packaged foods
- Stay hydrated. Have lots of water and include low calorie fluids like buttermilk, vegetable or dal soup in your diet.