# DIABETES AND NUTRITION: CARBOHYDRATES, FATS AND PROTEIN

Food provides nourishment and energy for your body. It's important to understand how different foods affect blood glucose.

## CARBOHYDRATES (CARBS)

Carbohydrates are the main source of fuel for the body. Carbs raise blood glucose and are found in many types of food.



#### Sugars

Sugars occur naturally in foods such as fruit, milk and honey. They're often added to food and always raise blood glucose.

#### Starches

Starches are found in bread, cereals, pasta and many other foods. Starches also raise blood glucose.

## Fiber

Fiber is found in foods such as vegetables, fruits and whole grains. Fiber doesn't raise blood glucose because it isn't digested or absorbed. It can help keep blood glucose from rising too fast and keep cholesterol at a healthy level.

# FATS

Fat is an energy source that can be stored until needed. Fat doesn't raise blood glucose but can cause weight gain. Not all fat is the same.

#### **Healthy Fats**

Healthy Fats can be heart healthy and may lower LDL (bad cholesterol). They're mostly found in vegetable oils, avocados, some nuts, seeds and fish.

#### **Unhealthy Fats**

Unhealthy Fats raise LDL cholesterol and are *not* heart healthy. *Saturated* fats are found in animal products such as meats and some dairy products. *Hydrogenated oils* and *trans fats* are formed when vegetable oils are processed into solid fats. They're found in many processed foods.



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## DIABETES AND NUTRITION: CARBOHYDRATES, FATS, AND PROTEIN (CONTINUED)

## PROTEIN

Protein helps the body build and repair muscles and other tissues. It has little or no effect on blood glucose, but many foods that contain protein also contain saturated fat. Choose low-fat or lean protein sources to get the benefits without the extra fat.

#### **Plant Protein**

Plant protein is found in dry beans, nuts and soy products. They're typically cholesterol free and low in saturated fat.

#### **Animal Protein**

Animal protein is found in fish, meats, cheeses and milk. They contain cholesterol and can be high in saturated fat. Choose lean or lower-fat options.



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