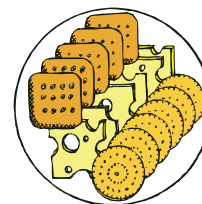


# What Does My Diet Have to Do with My Blood Sugar?

**What** you eat is important. Eating a variety of foods in moderation will give your body all the nutrients it needs. Food is made of three main parts: protein, carbohydrate, and fat.

When food is digested, the protein is broken down into amino acids; the fat is broken down into fatty acids; and the carbohydrate is broken down into glucose. Most of the glucose (sugar) in your blood comes from the carbohydrate in foods.

Foods high in carbohydrate usually make the blood glucose rise faster, and higher than foods higher in protein or fat. Eating some protein when carbohydrate-rich foods are eaten will help in keeping the blood glucose peak in your blood lower. For instance, this means eating cheese (protein-rich food) on the cracker (carbohydrate-rich food) instead of the cracker alone will make the blood glucose peak in your blood lower.



Foods have some of each nutrient - protein, carbohydrate, and fat - in them. However, many foods are mostly made up of one nutrient. Foods that are rich in carbohydrates are those from the Bread and Starchy Foods group, the Fruit group, the Milk and Dairy group, and the Vegetable group. However the Vegetable group is very low in both carbohydrates and calories.



What happens when you eat a piece of pie? Pie is mostly carbohydrate, so your blood glucose rises pretty quickly and fairly high. Eating a piece of pie by itself, without a protein food, will make your blood glucose very high. Eating a piece of pie, or other dessert, with your meal will give you some protein foods to help keep the blood glucose peak lower. The calories still count! Any dessert should be included in your overall meal plan.

**How much** you eat is important. Achieving or maintaining a healthy weight will help control your blood glucose. Too many calories, whether from carbohydrate, protein or fat, will raise blood glucose.

**Follow your meal plan.** If you are not sure what your meal plan is, talk to your doctor, dietitian, or nutritionist. Usually a meal plan includes three meals each day, and may include some snacks as well.

Karen Chapman-Novakofski, RD, LD, PhD

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