**ChatGPT Prompts**

1. **Q**: Are all sugar-free products calorie-free?

**A**: Not necessarily. Some sugar-free biscuits and cakes still contain carbohydrates in the form of starch that can also increase your blood glucose levels.

1. **Q**: Can bitter-tasting food, like gourd, help lower blood glucose levels?

**A**: Bitter-tasting foods do not help lower blood glucose levels.

1. **Q**: If I have diabetes, does that mean I can never consume sugar?

**A**: You may still be able to include some sugar in your diet by learning carbohydrate counting and knowing your requirements. Speak to your Dietician to know how.

1. **Q**: Does switching to wholegrain rice mean I can eat more rice?

**A**: The carbohydrate content of wholegrain rice is actually similar to regular rice. Still, wholegrain rice provides more fibre by comparison, hence making it a better choice for diabetes.

1. **Q**: Can I eat as much as I want, as long as I cut down on my carbohydrate intake?

**A**: Excessive intake of any nutrient, including protein, may lead to weight gain. It would be advisable to know your body’s requirements for all nutrients and keep to them.

1. **Q**: Is it okay to eat my favourite sweets when I have low blood glucose?  
   **A**: Yes, but in moderation. When going outdoors, keep sweets like Mentos on hand and consume one at a time if you experience symptoms of hypoglycemia (i.e. blood glucose level < 4.0 mmol/L). If you are in a safe space indoors, it is recommended to follow the 15/15 rule. Consume 15g of fast-acting carbohydrates, such as half a can of soft drink (e.g. Original Coca Cola) or half a glass of fruit juice. Then, have 15 minutes of rest. Afterwards, maintain your blood glucose level by consuming 15g of long-acting carbohydrates, such as 1 slice of bread or 3 pieces of plain biscuits. Take note to avoid highly sugary snacks, as overeating may cause your blood glucose levels to rise too much. Also, avoid taking beverages such as Milo and coffee which contain fat and prevent absorption of glucose into your bloodstream.
2. **Q**: If I have diabetes, does that mean I can never consume fruits?  
   **A**: People with diabetes should still eat all kinds of fruits, as they are rich sources of antioxidant vitamins, minerals, and fibre. Consume 2 portions of fresh fruit a day, but try to avoid fruit juices.
3. **Q**: If I have diabetes, does that mean I can never consume starchy foods?

**A**: No. Carbohydrate foods, particularly starchy foods such as rice, bread, noodles and cereals, form a major component of the body’s energy source. All starchy foods break down to glucose, which is the body’s preferred source of energy. The key is knowing how much your personalised requirements for carbohydrates are. Choose starchy foods that are high in fibre such as wholegrains.

1. **Q**: Since fat does not matter in relation to blood glucose levels, can I ignore the fat content in my meals?

**A**: It is true that fat does not have a direct impact on blood glucose levels. However, a large amount of fat in a meal can delay stomach-emptying and slow the digestion of carbohydrates, keeping your blood glucose levels elevated for longer. This makes it difficult to keep your blood glucose levels within the desirable range. It should also be noted that fat provides nearly twice as many calories as carbohydrates and protein (gram for gram). This is not helpful for individuals hoping to shed some weight. Consuming too much saturated fat may also lead to undesirable lipid profiles, increasing your risk of cardiovascular diseases.

1. **Q**: Will losing weight cure my diabetes?  
   **A**: If you are overweight, losing weight may not definitely cure your diabetes. Nonetheless, losing 5-10% of your initial weight may help you control your blood glucose levels by improving insulin resistance. In addition, keeping the weight off may also help control your blood lipids and blood pressure.
2. **Q**: What are the different types of diabetes?  
   **A**: There are 3 main types of diabetes: Type 1 diabetes, Type 2 diabetes, and gestational diabetes.
3. **Q**: What are the differences between Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes?  
   **A**: Type 1 diabetes occurs when the body is unable to produce insulin, whereas in Type 2 diabetes, either the body does not produce enough insulin or the insulin produced does not work. Type 1 diabetes most commonly presents in childhood and young adulthood. A family history puts a person at a slightly higher risk. Type 2 diabetes tends to occur in older people, above 40 years of age, especially those who are obese. Even though Type 2 diabetes is more common, it can be prevented. Type 1 diabetes can not.
4. **Q**: What is HbA1c?  
   **A**: HbA1c stands for haemoglobin A1c or glycated haemoglobin, which is haemoglobin to which glucose is bound. It is a blood test that estimates your average blood glucose level for the past 3 months. It is usually organised once every 3 to 4 months by your doctor at each visit to the clinic.
5. **Q**: Is testing my glucose levels with only HbA1c enough?  
   **A**: Glucose levels can fluctuate markedly throughout the day. As the HbA1c is done only once every 3 to 4 months, periodically self-monitoring your capillary blood glucose levels and how high or low it has been can help you make timely changes to your lifestyle and dietary choices. You can easily check your glucose levels daily with a glucometer, or with a continuous glucose sensor.
6. **Q**: What does a well-balanced diet consist of?  
   **A**: A well-balanced diet consists of less sugar, less fat, less salt, and more fibre. Health Promotion Board’s My Healthy Plate sets a good benchmark for the major food groups you should target to have in each meal. In one plate, half should be filled with fruits and vegetables, one-quarter with wholegrains, and the remaining one-quarter with meat and others.
7. **Q**: What are some strategies I can use to have a well-balanced diet?  
   **A**: To consume less sugary foods, consider replacing sweetened beverages, sweets and cakes, with milk, fruit and wholemeal crackers. Tackle fatty foods by limiting intake of fried dishes and using less butter, ghee and coconut oil in cooking. Instead, opt for low fat cooking methods such as baking, boiling, grilling and steaming. To minimise salt intake, use less preserved food such as salted fish and canned meats, and more fresh products. Lastly, incorporate more high fibre foods by switching to unpolished brown rice, wholegrain cereals and brains, and including fresh fruit and vegetables.
8. **Q**: Why do I sometimes feel numb in my fingers and limbs?

**A**: Diabetes most commonly affects the nerves of the upper and lower limbs, and can also affect nerves related to the eye, face and head. As such, the most common symptoms experienced are a tingling, burning, and pricking sensation or numbness of the hands and feet.

1. **Q**: What is BMI?  
   **A**: BMI stands for body mass index. It is measured by a person's weight (in kilograms) divided by the square of height (in metres).
2. **Q**: What is a normal BMI?

**A**: For Asians in Singapore, a BMI value between 18.5 and 22.9 indicates a healthy weight, whereas a BMI value of 23 and above is considered overweight.

1. **Q**: How can I differentiate hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia? What are their symptoms?  
   **A**: Hypoglycemia, or low blood glucose, happens when the blood glucose level falls below 4.0 mmol/L. Some early symptoms include shakiness, sweating and fast heartbeat. Hypoglycemia may also happen while you are sleeping, and some tell-tale signs are seizures, headaches, and feeling tired or confused upon waking. Hyperglycemia, or high blood glucose, results in thirst, frequent urination and even weight loss.
2. **Q**: What should I do when I have high blood glucose?  
   **A**: If your glucose level is high, do not panic. Follow these 5 main ways to control your glucose levels better:
3. Take your medications on time and at the same time each day.
4. Aim to have 3 meals daily that are consistent in timing and portion (follow the My Healthy Plate).
5. Cut and minimise snacking.
6. Include regular physical activity as much as you can. Every little bit helps.
7. Stay well-hydrated and drink water when thirsty. Avoid sugar-sweetened beverages.

Give it a few days to see if your dietary changes have an impact on your glucose levels. Keeping a food and blood glucose diary can help you keep track of your progress.

1. **Q**: What should I do if I have persistent high or low blood glucose?  
   **A**: If, despite your best efforts, your glucose levels are persistently high or low, you should consider seeking earlier medical attention. Our medical experts will be able to help you manage your blood glucose levels better.
2. **Q**: How can I monitor my blood glucose levels during festive periods like Ramadan?

**A**: During Ramadan fasting, you may experience decreased appetite, an urge to skip meals, and lower blood sugar levels. Hence, keep these tips on safe fasting in mind: 1) Delay having Suhoor, your pre-dawn meal, until it is as close as possible to the time for the Fajr prayer; 2) Eat sufficiently and moderately during Suhoor; 3) As soon as the sun has set, break the fast with Iftar without delay. 

1. **Q**: Why is my blood glucose level high in the morning even though I did not eat anything?  
   **A**: There are several reasons why your blood glucose level may be high in the morning even if you haven't eaten anything.
2. Even during fasting periods, your liver releases stored glucose into your blood. People with diabetes have a relatively higher glucose release from their liver, hence your glucose may be high even when you have not eaten anything.
3. Your body may be producing stress hormones during an illness. Medications prescribed during illnesses (e.g. steroids) can also increase glucose levels.
4. Consumption of larger meals, that are high in carbohydrates and fat, at late hours can lead to higher post-meal blood glucose levels over an extended period of time.

Hence, it is advised to consume your last meal 3 hours before bedtime and try brisk walking for 30 minutes daily. If you find yourself craving a late-night snack, opt for healthy snacks such as half an apple, or plain yoghurt with nuts.

1. **Q**: What are the symptoms of diabetes?  
   **A**: The early symptoms of diabetes may not be obvious, or there may be no symptoms at all. Nonetheless, some possible signs include excessive thirst and urination, fatigue, weight loss, blurred vision, slow-healing sores, and frequent infections.
2. **Q**: Can diabetes cause hypertension? What are the symptoms of hypertension?  
   **A**: Diabetes is often associated with cardiovascular risk factors like hypertension, or high blood pressure. Hypertension usually causes no symptoms, but over time, it can damage the heart and blood vessels, leading to stroke, heart attack or renal failure. While hypertension is usually picked up during a routine medical examination, if it reaches dangerously high levels, it can cause physical symptoms like headaches, visual disturbances, chest pain, or feeling breathless.
3. **Q**: What is the recommended frequency and intensity of exercise?  
   **A**: It is recommended to achieve at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity per week, or 30 minutes of exercise 5 times a week. In addition to aerobic exercise, resistance strength training is also important for overall health and fitness. The key is to be consistent, so that you can lose weight steadily and sustainably without risking extreme muscle loss.
4. **Q**: What is diabetes?  
   **A**: Diabetes is a chronic condition characterised by high glucose levels.
5. **Q**: What is glucose?  
   **A**: Glucose comes from our food and is also produced by the liver. It is the main source of energy for the body’s cells and is transported through the bloodstream. Glucose needs to enter cells to be used.
6. **Q**: What is insulin?   
   **A**: Insulin is the hormone that acts like a ‘key’ to allow glucose to enter cells. If the pancreas does not produce enough insulin, or cells are not able to respond well enough to insulin, glucose is unable to enter the cells. Glucose levels in the bloodstream rise, resulting in diabetes.
7. **Q**: How is diabetes diagnosed?  
   **A**: The following several blood tests can be done to find out whether you have diabetes:
8. Random blood glucose test: Measures blood glucose level without fasting or regard to when you last ate.
9. Fasting blood glucose test: Measures blood glucose level after an overnight fast for at least 8 hours.
10. Oral glucose tolerance test: Measures blood glucose level before and 2 hours after you have consumed 75g of a sugary drink.
11. **Q**: How is diabetes treated?  
    **A**: Type 1 diabetes will require a regular dose of insulin, as prescribed by a doctor. Some patients with mild Type 2 diabetes can achieve their target blood glucose levels with diet and exercise alone, but most Type 2 diabetics will eventually require oral medications to control their blood sugar levels, and possibly insulin injection in the later stage of the disease. The basic treatment strategy is to maintain good control over the amount of glucose in your blood, eat a balanced diet, exercise regularly, and watch your weight. These will prevent the onset of diabetes.
12. **Q**: What are the complications of diabetes?  
    **A**: Diabetes, when poorly-controlled, results in multiple complications. Diabetes is a leading cause of blindness, kidney failure, limb amputation, heart attack and stroke.
13. **Q**: What should I eat if I have diabetes?  
    **A**: People with diabetes do not need to embark on a special diet. Rather than a restrictive diet, a diet suitable for diabetes is simply a healthy eating plan that is individualised according to your requirements and lifestyle. It is recommended that you see a dietician to guide you on dietary changes that can help you control your blood glucose levels and manage your weight.
14. **Q**: How often should I check my blood sugar levels?  
    **A**: The frequency at which you check your blood sugar depends on the type of diabetes you have and whether you take any diabetes medication. You should discuss this with your healthcare provider. Typical times to check blood sugar tend to be:
15. Immediately after waking up, before you eat or drink anything
16. Before eating
17. After 2 hours of eating
18. When you feel giddy/confused/sweaty/very hungry
19. Before/after exercise
20. When you are sick or not feeling well
21. At bedtime
22. **Q**: Can I have durians if I have diabetes?  
    **A**: Yes, as with all fruits, durians can be consumed if you have diabetes. Two medium seeds is approximately one serving and would provide 15g of carbohydrate. Exercising portion control is essential!
23. **Q**: How can I lose weight and manage my diabetes at the same time?  
    **A**: Calories are normally used to measure the energy content of the food and beverages you consume. It is important to know how many calories you require daily, regardless of your weight goals. Consult your dietician to help finetune the ideal caloric target for you to achieve a sustainable weight loss while managing your blood glucose levels.
24. **Q**: How can I manage my diabetes while travelling?  
    **A**: Before you travel, consult your doctor to discuss your holiday plans and request for a travel memo. Also, check for time zone and weather differences that could affect the administering and storage of insulin, the nearest hospital available, as well as insurance coverage for diabetes-related emergencies. Always pack more insulin and oral diabetes medications in case your journey is delayed due to unforeseen circumstances. The same goes for other diabetes supplies such as blood glucose monitors, test strips, lancets and snacks.
25. **Q**: What types of exercise do you recommend?  
    **A**: Some forms of exercise you may consider are: taking a 20 minute walk after dinner, using the stairs instead of the lift, getting off the bus one stop earlier and walking the rest of the way to your destination, and going swimming.
26. **Q**: Can I still smoke if I have diabetes?  
    **A**: If you smoke, get support and advice on how to quit. Diabetes itself increases your risk for heart disease and stroke, and smoking further increases this risk.
27. **Q**: Can I still consume alcohol if I have diabetes?  
    **A**: Alcohol can interfere with your meal plan and blood glucose control, especially if you are taking insulin or medication for your diabetes. People with diabetes should avoid alcohol in general. But if you have to, remember to check your blood sugar levels before drinking to ensure that it is not too low. Accompany the drink with a carbohydrate-containing meal as alcohol can cause your blood sugar levels to drop drastically within 24 hours of drinking. Healthy individuals should drink responsibly. If you do not suffer from other health conditions and still want to drink, keep to only 1 drink for women, and 2 drinks for men. One drink is equal to 220ml of beer (about ⅔ of a can) or 100ml of wine or 30ml of spirits (about 1 shot glass).
28. **Q**: What are some healthy snacking options for people with diabetes?  
    **A**: Some healthy snacks you may consider are: 1 small apple, 10 grapes, 1 wedge of papaya, 1 small pear, 1 medium banana, and 1 glass of low fat or high calcium soy milk with less sugar.
29. **Q**: What are some tips for staying motivated to exercise in the long term?  
    **A**: We all know staying active and exercising regularly helps us stay healthy and in shape. But some days, it gets hard to stay motivated to work out when all we want to do is sit on our comfy sofas and watch TV or play video games. How do we stay motivated? Here are some tips:
30. Break your 150 minutes of exercise per week into bite-sized chunks of 15 to 20-minute workouts and fit them into your daily routine. For example, exercise during lunch hour by going for a brisk walk in the park.
31. Add more physical activity into your daily life. For example, try to brisk walk while shopping at larger malls like IMM or Vivocity.
32. Ask your family and friends to join in. This could be 30 minutes of brisk walking together with friends while catching up, or having a few rounds of family badminton at the neighbourhood park.
33. If your exercise routine is starting to get old, try something new and exciting to pump up your enthusiasm. Consider HealthHub’s wide range of workout classes, from Zumba outside Marina Bay Sands to aerobics at your neighbourhood mall.
34. **Q**: Will eating and drinking too much sugary stuff cause diabetes?  
    **A**: Consuming too much of anything, including sugary food and drink, will likely lead to obesity, a major cause of insulin resistance. Excessive consumption of sugar puts the pancreas under tremendous stress to produce enough insulin to match the spikes in blood sugar levels. Over time, this may increase the risk of insulin resistance, poor blood glucose control and diabetes.
35. **Q**: Is it possible to reverse Type 2 diabetes?

**A**: There is currently no cure for Type 2 diabetes. However, there is enough evidence to suggest that bariatric surgery in obese patients causes diabetes to enter a remission phase. Although there is no cure for diabetes at this point in time, adhering to a healthy lifestyle coupled with regular check-ups and medication compliance can keep diabetes under good control and prevent complications.

1. **Q**: Does diabetes really result in sugar in the urine?  
   **A**: In healthy people, the kidney is able to absorb all of the sugar that it filters from the blood. In patients with previously undiagnosed or poorly controlled diabetes, the high sugar load in the filtered blood means the kidney is not able to absorb all of the sugar. As a result, large amounts of sugar are passed out in the urine. Sugar in the urine increases the risk of fungal infection of the external genitalia (e.g. thrush) and urinary tract infections. It also leads to the passing of large amounts of urine and, consequently, dehydration.
2. **Q**: Does diabetes management mean only consuming foods labelled “sugar-free” or “suitable for diabetics”?  
   **A**: Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA) requires “sugar-free” products to contain no more than 0.5g of sugar per 100g or 100ml. These usually have less sugar than other similar products but may contain other artificial sweeteners like sorbitol. Food labelled “no added sugar” or “suitable for diabetics” can be misleading, as naturally occurring sugars or fat, and calorie content are not taken into consideration. It is crucial to read the nutritional information for any type of food to check the amount of carbohydrate, natural sugars and calories it contains. Products like fruit juices with “no added sugar” can still raise blood sugar levels as quickly as sugary drinks, since they contain natural fruit sugars. Snacks that use artificial sweeteners can still be high in carbohydrates, fat and calories even though they might be low in sugar. These products can affect blood sugar control and risk excessive weight gain — a major risk factor for diabetes.
3. **Q**: Does having diabetes mean I must swear off sweets or chocolate forever?  
   **A**: Those with poor blood sugar control should avoid sugary treats like sweets and chocolate, as these can quickly cause unwanted spikes in sugar levels and provide little nutrition. Those with good glycaemic control should also exercise caution by eating sweets sparingly. Regular blood sugar monitoring is important when having sweet treats.
4. **Q**: Will cutting carbohydrates completely cure diabetes?  
   **A**: Diabetes is an incurable condition that can be well-controlled. Cutting out carbohydrates completely is not recommended. A person who avoids carbohydrates completely is susceptible to low blood sugar levels and is likely to suffer from long-term deficiencies due to a lack of carbohydrate-containing food. In serious situations, hypoglycemia can result in diabetic comas that may be life-threatening, especially for those who are not consuming sufficient carbohydrates and are currently on diabetic medications. A balanced diet is essential for diabetes management. Eat more wholegrains instead of refined grains, and enjoy a variety of other carbohydrate-containing food, including low-fat yoghurt, fruits, beans and vegetables such as broccoli, carrots and sweet potatoes. It is advisable that carbohydrates form around 50 percent of the daily diet. Consult a dietitian for the recommended quantity as this differs for each individual.
5. **Q**: Does white rice cause diabetes?  
   **A**: Although recent studies by the Harvard School of Public Health and the National University Health System found that white rice has a high Glycaemic Index (GI), it is important to understand its overall health impact when taken as a part of our daily meals. GI ranks carbohydrates in food based on the rate at which they affect blood sugar levels. The important difference between sugar and rice is that sugar contributes calories with little nutritional benefit, while rice provides satiety and can be part of a healthy, balanced diet if accompanied by side dishes packed with nutritional value such as tofu, fish, lean meat, eggs and vegetables. In contrast, it is easy to eat too much sugar as it does not give the feeling of fullness and can lead to obesity, raising the risk of type 2 diabetes. Wholegrains like brown or red rice are better than white rice as these contain more nutrients like iron, magnesium, B vitamins and fibre. Wholegrains also take more time to digest, giving the feeling of fullness for longer. However, do note that any type of carbohydrates, including wholegrains, when taken in excess can still cause poor blood sugar control. Moderation is key.
6. **Q**: Should I make food choices based on their GI?  
   **A**: In general, high GI foods raise blood sugar levels faster by releasing sugar quickly into the bloodstream. This is more useful for athlete’s post-exercise or for patients with hypoglycemia. Some fad diabetes diets advise avoiding high GI foods completely. However, GI is just one measure of the nutritional value of food. Similarly, some low GI foods like cake, chocolate bars and potato chips are unhealthy and lack nutritional value, and are unsuitable for patients with type 2 diabetes. Maintaining a balanced diet with fruits, vegetables and carbohydrates, and regular exercise are the best ways to stay fit, prevent weight gain and stay healthy.
7. **Q**: Can I eat as many fruits as I want without affecting my diabetic condition?  
   **A**: Fruits contain many vitamins, minerals and fibre, so it is great to include them in your meals. They also contain natural sugars and carbohydrates, so stick to the recommended two portions daily. Spreading out these two portions or eating them between meals can help to prevent sudden spikes in sugar, and help with blood sugar control. Pick fresh whole fruits instead of juiced, dried or canned ones as these can contain added sugar.

**Remarks**

1. Categories of Prompts

* Basic questions
* Clarification questions
* Questions pertaining to healthy behaviours

1. Sources

* Prompts are from different sources and websites
* Answers from Win Against Diabetes Booklet, HealthHub, Norain, SingHealth, Diabetes Singapore