

1.1. Healthy and happy eating with type 2 diabetes

Food is a strong determinant of how well type 2 diabetes treatment will work. It is also one of the dilemmas that arises after a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes. People living with type 2 diabetes find it difficult to choose what to eat because of the prevailing myths and misconceptions.

Classes of food

There are generally six classes of food: carbohydrates, proteins, fats/oils, minerals, vitamins and water. These classes of food are derived from the main food sources:

1. Carbohydrates : which can be unprocessed or processed ;
 - Examples of unprocessed carbohydrates
 - 1) Grains: rice, millet, quinoa, oats, guinea corn etc
 - 2) Tubers: potatoes, yams, coco-yams
 - 3) Suckers: plantain, bananas, plantains
 - 4) Fruits
 - 5) Vegetables
 - 6) Lentils and légumes
 - Examples of processed carbohydrates
 - 1) Baked foods like bread, tortillas etc
 - 2) Pasta
2. Proteins like meat, fish etc
 - Meat
 - Fish and sea food
 - Dairy like yoghurt, cheese
 - Dairy substitutes like soy milk, tofu, almond milk
3. Fats and oils include the following
 - Fat: butter, lard, margarine
 - Oils: groundnut oil, olive oil, canola, soy oil, sunflower oil
 - Nuts: groundnut/peanut, cashew, almond, pistachio, hazel, etc
 - Seeds: chia, flaxseed, melon, sesame, hemp, etc
4. Fruits like apples, orange and others
5. vegetables like non-starchy vegetables, starchy vegetables, green leafy vegetables and colored vegetables

Eating well and enjoying food with or without type 2 diabetes entails combining these food groups in a manner that enables the body to get the nutrients it needs in a way that gives a pleasurable experience. These depends on a number of factors;

- Individual preference
- Cultural and traditional preference
- Work pressures and schedules
- Frequency of travel

- Knowledge and attitudes towards food
- Socio-economic status
- Availability of food

Therefore, it is difficult to prescribe what constitutes a healthy meal. It means different things for different people depending on the place, time, and cost.