



Albany Medical Center

Goodman Diabetes Service



---

## How Much Should I Eat?

---

How much you need to eat depends upon your activity. Women shouldn't eat less than 1200 calories a day and men shouldn't eat less than 1500 calories a day. Use the formula below to figure out how many calories you are eating **now** to maintain your current weight.

**If you are:**

**Multiply your weight by:**

Obese, very inactive or always dieting	10
Over 55, an active woman or an inactive man	13
A very active woman or an active man	15
A very active man or an athlete	20

$$\begin{array}{ccccc} \underline{\hspace{2cm}} & \times & \underline{\hspace{2cm}} & = & \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \\ \text{Your Current Weight} & & \text{Number above} & & \text{Calories per day} \\ & & & & \text{to stay at your} \\ & & & & \text{current weight} \end{array}$$

To lose weight, subtract 500 to 1000 calories per day.

Once you know how many calories you need each day, you can figure out how many carbohydrates (carbs) to eat each day. The chart on the back shows how many servings and grams of carbs are recommended for various calorie levels. These recommendations provide 40 - 50% of total calories from carbs. Carbs should be spread throughout the day.

Try to choose healthy carbs such as whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, rather than using your carbohydrate allowance up on "big ticket" items like sweets. Eat a variety of foods!

<u>Calorie Level</u>	<u>Carb Servings</u>	<u>Carb Grams</u>
1200	9 - 10	135 - 150
1500	10 - 12	150 - 180
1800	12 - 15	180 - 225
2100	15 - 18	225 - 270
2400	17 - 20	255 - 300
2800	20 - 23	300 - 345

Foods that contain carbohydrate include:

starchy vegetables	fruits and fruit juices
milk and yogurt	sweets and desserts
grains, breads, cereals and dried beans	

The best place to get carb information (how much of the food contains how much total carb) is from the food label. If there is no label, you can get the information from a carb counting book (or check our web site for links to on-line food information).

Your diabetes educator can help you learn to read food labels.

Your diabetes educator can also help you plan how to space your carbs, based on whether you need to:

- Eat no more than a maximum number of carbs at meals (if you are using diet, physical activity or medicines that do not cause low blood glucose) **OR**
- Be consistent in timing and amount of carbs (if you are taking medicines that can cause low blood glucose) **OR**
- Match insulin to carbs (if you are taking pre-meal fast-acting insulin).

Ask which of these would be best for you.