Information about Diabetic Menus in Hospital

In Alberta Health Services (AHS) hospitals, the Patient Food Services department provides all meals and snacks for patients.

Diabetic meals and snacks in the hospital

Meals and snacks for patients with diabetes follow the Alberta Health Services diabetes program guidelines.

- Each meal includes:
 - A Grain Product such as bread, rice, or pasta
 - A Vegetable or Fruit
 - A Meat and Alternative such as meat, fish, chicken, or legumes, or at least one Milk and Alternative such as milk, yogurt, or cheese
- Meals and snacks are spread over the day to help manage blood sugar.

Adults with diabetes receive 3 meals and an evening snack, providing the available carbohydrate as listed below.

Available carbohydrate at each meal	
Meal	Available carbohydrate (+/- 5 g)
Breakfast	60 grams
Lunch	60 grams
Supper	60 grams
Evening	30 grams

Pregnant women with diabetes receive 3 meals and 3 snacks.

Available carbohydrate at each meal	
Meal	Available carbohydrate (+/- 5 g)
Breakfast	44 grams
Lunch	59 grams
Supper	59 grams
Snacks	Each snack has 30 grams

Children with diabetes are given a calorie or carbohydrate level based on their age and their diet at home.

If the meals and snacks you receive in hospital are not the right amount of food for you, ask to see a dietitian.

Foods with carbohydrate

- Your body uses carbohydrate in foods for energy. Carbohydrate-containing foods will also raise your blood sugar.
- Carbohydrates found in foods are sugars, starches and fibre.
 - foods made from grain (bread, muffins, crackers, pasta, cereal)
 - grains (wheat, oats, rice, barley, rye)
 - starchy vegetables (potatoes, sweet potatoes, corn, squash, peas)
 - sweet foods, desserts
 - sugars, syrups
 - beans, lentils
 - milk, yogurt
 - fruits

Available carbohydrate on menus

Some AHS hospitals list the amount of available carbohydrate on the menu you use to choose your food. The meal slip on your meal tray may also list amounts of available carbohydrate for the foods you receive.

Note: Some foods will not have available carbohydrate listed. These foods are:

- foods with less than 5 grams available carbohydrate, such as sugar-free hot drinks, condiments, and roast meats or baked fish
- nutritional supplements (for example, drinks or puddings)



Types of foods offered on diabetic menus

- Higher fibre foods such as bran cereal, muffins, and whole wheat bread.
- Lower fat cheese, soft non-hydrogenated margarine, lower fat desserts, and lower fat gravy.
- Sugar substitutes for those who limit added sugar. Sugar-reduced spreads and syrup are provided at breakfast.
- No sugar added puddings and yogurts are available for adults with diabetes. These are not provided to children.
- Some hospitals have Greek yogurt instead of no sugar added yogurt. Either can be chosen as part of a diabetic menu.
- Salt is not provided on your meal tray, but you can ask for it. You can also ask for Mrs. Dash®, a spice and herb blend.
- Juice is not provided on meal trays, but you can ask for it. It is not recommended for people with diabetes.
- If you are on a special fluid diet before or after tests or surgery, you may need to drink juice to make sure you get enough carbohydrate. Talk to your healthcare team if you have concerns about drinking juice.
- An evening snack that includes a protein food is given to adults, pregnant women, and children with diabetes. Examples include milk, cheese, and sandwiches with meat filling. You can ask for other types of snacks.
- Children and pregnant women with diabetes will also have morning and afternoon snacks delivered.

Food dislikes and preferences?

At some AHS hospitals, you can choose your own meals from a menu.

Some hospitals choose meals for you, but changes can be made.

- You can tell Patient Food Services staff or your nurse about your dislikes so that your meal choices can be changed. It may take up to 24 hours for you to see changes in your meals.
- You can ask your nurse to request a visit from Patient Food Services to discuss your food preferences.



Suggestions or concerns?

About the food in your meals and snacks:

• Ask to talk to the Patient Food Services supervisor or dietitian.

About how your diabetes is managed in hospital:

• Talk to your nurse or doctor. You can also ask to see a dietitian.

Want more information?

Would you like to get the latest information to manage your diabetes? Attend a class in your area.

Visit <u>www.albertahealthservices.ca</u> and search for *Diabetes Programs*.