

Food and diabetes – first steps

This leaflet provides dietary advice to people who are newly diagnosed with diabetes. If you have any further questions, please speak to your diabetes dietitian.

The best advice for people with diabetes is to follow a healthy diet similar to that recommended for everybody. You may need to pay a little more attention to what and when you eat but there is no reason why healthy eating cannot be enjoyable.

We recommend that you see a dietitian for individually tailored advice about your diet. However, until then following these simple guidelines will help improve your blood sugar levels.

Eat three regular meals a day

It is important to have some low-fat carbohydrate (starchy) foods at each meal. These include bread, potatoes, breakfast cereals, pasta, rice, noodles, chapattis, yam, plantain and green banana.

Reduce sugar and sugary foods

Instead of the ordinary sugary drinks, choose diet, low-calorie or no added sugar drinks, water, or tea and coffee without sugar (you can use artificial sweeteners instead). Reduce sweets, cakes, biscuits, jam and honey, and limit all fruit juices including pure unsweetened fruit juice.

Eat large portions of vegetables and salad with your meals

Have three to four portions of fruit spread out during the day. For example, an apple, an orange and a banana.

Eat less fat and fatty foods

Use less butter, margarine or oil. Grill rather than fry food whenever possible. Eat lean meat and remove any fat or skin.

Foods labelled 'suitable for diabetics' are not recommended. These are of no special benefit to people with diabetes and are expensive.

Useful sources of information

Diabetes UK

Provide information, help and peer support for people with diabetes so that they can manage their condition effectively.

t: 0345 123 2399

w: www.diabetes.org.uk

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the diabetes dietitians on **020 7188 1967** or **020 7188 4356** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets

Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

t: 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

To make comments or raise concerns about the Trust's services, please contact PALS. Ask a member of staff to direct you to the PALS office or:

t: 020 7188 8801 at St Thomas' **t:** 020 7188 8803 at Guy's **e:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk

Language Support Services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch using the following contact details.

t: 020 7188 8815 **fax:** 020 7188 5953

NHS 111

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

t: 111

NHS Choices

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

w: www.nhs.uk

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Membership is free and it is completely up to you how much you get involved. To become a member of our Foundation Trust, you need to be 18 years of age or over, live in Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham, Wandsworth or Westminster or have been a patient at either hospital in the last five years. To join:

t: 0848 143 4017 **e:** members@gstt.nhs.uk **w:** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk

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