HEALTHY CHOICES FOR DIABETICS in the Natural State

CHCA COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS OF ARKANSAS
# HEALTHY CHOICES FOR DIABETICS in the Natural State

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This booklet shares ideas to help you manage your diabetes over the long term so that you may avoid or delay problems and live a long, healthy and active life.

Your diabetes care team may include a doctor, nurse, registered dietitian, pharmacist, and diabetes educator. Don’t forget how important your family and friends are to your care team.

Community Health Center sites in Arkansas and their phone numbers are listed on the inside back cover of this booklet. The Community Health Centers can give you more information and help you get your diabetes under control.

For an electronic version of the Community Health Center map, visit www.chc-ar.org/arkansas-chc-map.
The saying ‘eat a rainbow’ helps remind people to eat different colored fruits and vegetables.

Choosing different colors of foods means that someone gets a wide variety of antioxidants beneficial to their health.*

* www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3052441/
Dark green leafy vegetables are a great source of nutrition, according to the Department of Agriculture (USDA). Leafy greens are rich in vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants.*

The USDA suggests that folate in leafy greens may help protect against cancer, while vitamin K helps prevent osteoporosis.


Types of leafy greens:

- Beet greens
- Cabbage
- Collard greens
- Kale
- Microgreens (immature greens produced from the seeds of vegetables and herbs)
- Romaine lettuce
- Spinach
- Watercress
A balanced diet should include healthful monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats.

Best sources of healthy fats include:

- Avocados
- Oils (olive, canola, sunflower, sesame, soy, and corn)
- Nuts
- Seeds
- Fatty fish

People should limit their intake of saturated and trans fats, according to the American Heart Association.*

Foods containing large amounts of saturated fat include red meat, butter, cheese, and ice cream.

Foods high in trans fats include doughnuts, cookies, and cakes.

According to the American Heart Association (AHA), eating one serving of nuts or peanuts daily in place of red or processed meat, french fries, or dessert may benefit your health and prevent long-term weight gain.*

The AHA suggests that Brazil nuts, in particular, may help someone feel fuller and stabilize their blood sugar.

**Healthy Nuts**

- Almonds
- Pistachios
- Walnuts
- Cashews
- Pecans
- Macadamia nuts
- Brazil nuts
- Hazelnuts

*newsroom.heart.org/news/nuts-for-nuts?preview=190e*
According to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, fiber can help improve blood cholesterol levels and lower the risk of heart disease, obesity, and type 2 diabetes.* People can get enough fiber in their diet by eating whole grains, vegetables, and beans.

- **Apples, bananas, oranges, strawberries** all have around 3 to 4 grams of fiber.
- **Raspberries** win the fiber race at 8 grams per cup.
- **Exotic fruits** are also good sources of fiber: A mango has 5 grams, a persimmon has 6 grams, and 1 cup of guava has about 9 grams.
- **Dark-colored vegetables.** In general, the darker the color of the vegetable, the higher the fiber content. For example, carrots, beets, and broccoli are fiber rich.

*www.eatright.org/food/vitamins-and-supplements/nutrient-rich-foods/fiber*
Beans and pulses (the seeds of plants that are legumes, like dry peas, chickpeas or lentils) are a good source of protein for people on a plant-based diet. Pulses are also a good source of fiber.

Beans and pulses also contain beneficial fiber, vitamins, and minerals. A ½-cup portion size equals one serving of carbohydrates, so be mindful of not spiking your blood sugar.

Some research even says pulses may help people feel fuller and lose weight.*

**Types of Beans**

- Black beans
- Northern beans
- Black eyed peas
- Cannellini beans
- Chickpeas (garbanzo beans)
- Kidney beans
- Lima beans
- Pinto beans
- Fava beans
- Navy beans

*www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3042778/*
Drinking plenty of water has many healthy benefits. Water can lead to clearer thinking and reduce mood swings. Water can also help prevent overheating, constipation, and kidney stones, according to the CDC.*

- **Drink water** when you wake up.
- **Drink a glass of water** with every meal.
- **Drink sparkling water or seltzer** instead of soda.
- **Add flavor.** Adding sliced fruits, vegetables and herbs to your water is a great way to give it a bit of flavor without consuming extra sugar or sugar substitutes.

Our health centers can help you learn to control your diabetes or pre-diabetes. Visit your local clinic for more information about nutritional health for you, your family, and your community.