



TYPE 2 DIABETES (T2D)

What is diabetes?

- More than 1 million Australians have T2D.
- When you eat carbohydrates, your body breaks them down into glucose (sugar), which enters your bloodstream. This sugar is an important source of energy that can be used immediately or stored in your liver and muscles for another time.
- Your pancreas releases the hormone insulin, which allows the glucose to move from the bloodstream into your body's cells to be used for energy. This prevents a build-up of blood sugars and keeps it within a healthy range.
- Type 2 Diabetes (T2D) occurs when insulin is no longer effective in controlling blood sugars – the body has become 'resistant' to insulin, so blood sugar levels rise.
- Genetics, age and family history play a role in the development of T2D. An inactive lifestyle and poor diet can contribute to the development of T2D. It is a serious, progressive condition that can cause nerve problems, kidney failure and blindness if left untreated.

Managing Type 2 Diabetes

EAT WELL

There is no specific 'diabetes diet' – it is simply about eating well, for life. It is important that you eat small portions of healthy carbohydrates regularly. This includes:

- ✓ **Grain foods, preferably wholegrain** (such as bread, pasta, rice, quinoa and couscous)
- ✓ **Starchy vegetables** (such as potato, sweet potato and corn)
- ✓ **Legumes** (beans, chickpeas and lentils)
- ✓ **Dairy** (milk and yoghurt)
- ✓ **Fruit**

Non-starchy vegetables (such as broccoli, cucumber and tomato) should also feature heavily. Lean proteins (meat, seafood, eggs) do not influence blood sugar levels, but are an important part of a balanced meal.

At the same time, you should minimise your intake of saturated fat by limiting deep fried foods, pastries, coconut oil, butter and cream. Choose reduced-fat dairy foods and trim the fat off meat (including chicken skin).

ACHIEVE A HEALTHY WEIGHT

If you are overweight, weight loss (even in small amounts) can improve your insulin resistance and help to manage diabetes. Your dietitian can provide personalised advice to help you lose weight safely and steadily.



EXERCISE REGULARLY

Regular exercise is important for everyone – it reduces your risk of many diseases, can assist with weight management and boosts mental health. It also improves insulin sensitivity and so is essential for people with T2D. Speak to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine and build up slowly if you are new to exercise.

Diabetes-friendly day on a plate



Breakfast – two-egg omelette with tomatoes, spinach and zucchini served with two slices of wholegrain bread



Morning tea – one piece of fresh fruit and a milk-based coffee



Lunch – tuna, cheese and salad wrap served with crudites



Afternoon tea – one piece of fresh fruit, wholegrain crackers and hummus



Dinner – lentil and quinoa shepherd's pie



Supper – one small tub of plain yoghurt

In addition to the above, you may need to monitor your blood glucose levels. Speak to your doctor in regards to frequency.