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## ADOPTING A LOW CARB LIFESTYLE

- Lifestyle vs diet
- Goal setting
- Make the choices you want “easier”
- Identify your triggers
- Maximize satisfaction
- Social gatherings
- Grocery shopping
- Have a plan
- Fresh or Frozen?
- How many carbs should I eat?

### Lifestyle vs diet

“Following a diet” is often thought of as eating or drinking certain items for a short period to reach a goal. A low carb diet is not a short term option for most people with diabetes. Reducing carbs is an important lifestyle change for long term health. This shift can take time. Be patient as you learn and adapt.

### Goal setting

To make progress, it is important to set and keep track of your goals. Your goals and lifestyle changes should be based on what success looks like to you. Set realistic timelines for yourself to address both long term and short goals. Consider how you would like to measure change. Review your progress often to keep focused. It is valuable to write down or talk with someone you trust about lifestyle adjustments you will make. It never hurts to tell them why these changes are valuable to you too. Including supportive friends and family in your goals can be a useful tool. High and low blood sugar levels can affect motivation and decision making at times, so having extra support never hurts.

### Make the choices you want “easier”

A key to making changes stick is making sure they are simple and easy for you. Identify healthy grab-and-go foods you like that leave you feeling full. When possible, keep these foods at the places you go most often. Think about precut or frozen options if prep is a barrier to eating your fresh food before it goes bad.

### Identify your triggers

The food choices you make at home usually start at the grocery store. Consider only bringing home items that you will feel good about eating. It is important to make sure you are able to eat in moderation while feeling full too. Feeling deprived often leads to negative outcomes. It is ok if you are not ready to give up certain foods. Think about ways you can enjoy them with confidence.

### Maximize satisfaction

Consider what foods you love. What about them do you enjoy? Is it the crunch, the salt, the sweet, the habit, or the tradition? It is possible to achieve many of those experiences in ways that support your health when making food choices. Take some time to think about how you can do that.

## **Social gatherings**

Food and socializing often go hand-in-hand. When going to a gathering consider bringing a dish that you can eat. Another option is to share low carb recipe ideas with the host in advance. You may be surprised as to how many people are trying to make healthy food choices and will like the new ideas.

## **Grocery shopping**

Many stores offer pick-up or delivery. At most stores, you can create lists when ordering online that can be reused week-to-week. This will help save you time and money by reducing impulse purchases.

## **Have a plan**

Before going grocery shopping create a plan! Have a basic idea of what you plan to make and when you will shop next before you go. Select a few simple recipes that you will have time to make. If you're using a search engine, like Google or Bing, it can be helpful to use keywords to find more recipe results. Keywords include Keto, low carb, Whole30, Atkins, or diabetic. Build your grocery list from the ingredients you will need.

## **Fresh or Frozen?**

Think about purchasing some frozen items if you know you won't be going back to the store for several weeks. Frozen food can help hold you over once your fresh items are done and you can get back to the store. Frozen produce is often precut, which can save time as well. Try to aim to eat the rainbow. A variety of colors and flavors keeps meals interesting and boosts nutrition.

## **How many carbs should I eat?**

The amount of carbs each person needs is individual. It depends on their size, activity, and hunger level. The amount of carbs eaten is measured in grams. To determine the exact amount of carbs you should be eating, make an appointment with a registered dietician. Apps which track your eating habits can only give a general estimate on how many carbs you should have.

## LOW CARB GROCERY ITEMS

The items below can fit into a low carb diet. Select a variety of colors, flavors, and textures to include in your daily meals to ensure you are nourishing yourself well. Follow the hyperlinks for nutrient information, how to prepare and store these foods, and recipe ideas. Not every item below will work for everyone. A dietician can help you identify healthful portion sizes and make personalized decisions.

### PRODUCE

#### Vegetables (Fresh or Frozen)

- [Artichokes](#)
- [Arugula](#)
- [Asparagus](#)
- [Bamboo shoots](#)
- [Beet greens](#)
- [Bok choy](#)
- [Broccoli](#)
- [Brussel sprouts](#)
- [Butternut squash](#)
- [Cabbage](#)
- [Carrots \(raw\)](#)
- [Cauliflower](#)
- [Celery](#)
- [Garlic](#)
- [Ginger](#)
- [Green beans](#)
- [Kale](#)
- [Leeks](#)
- [Lettuce](#)
- [Mushrooms](#)
- [Mustard greens](#)
- [Okra](#)
- [Onions](#)
- [Radish](#)
- [Spinach](#)
- [Swiss chard](#)
- [Turnip](#)

*Frozen veggies can be a cheaper and convenient option for you. They offer a similar nutrition profile to their fresh counterparts and are often precut. Cleaning and cutting veggies is a common barrier to eating them. While precut items may cost more, it may save money if food waste is reduced.*

#### Whole fruit (Fresh or Frozen)

\*Higher in healthier carbs – eat in moderation

- [Apple](#)
- [Avocado](#)
- [Banana \(green\)](#)
- [Blackberries](#)
- [Blueberries](#)
- [Cantaloupe](#)
- [Cherries](#)
- [Unsweetened coconut flakes](#)
- [Cranberries](#)
- [Cucumber](#)
- [Eggplant](#)
- [Grapefruit](#)
- [Honeydew](#)
- [Lemon](#)
- [Lime](#)
- [Olives](#)
- [Orange](#)
- [Peach](#)
- [Pear](#)
- [Pepper](#)
- [Plum](#)
- [Raspberries](#)
- [Spaghetti squash](#)
- [Star fruit](#)
- [Strawberries](#)
- [Tomatillo](#)
- [Tomatoes](#)
- [Unsweetened chocolate & cocoa powder](#)
- [Zucchini](#)

*All fruit contains sugars (mainly fructose). The total amount of sugar may vary by size and ripeness. Fruit in dehydrated, canned, and juiced forms often have added sugars as well. Read nutrition labels and eat in moderation. Frozen fruit can be a cheaper and easier as they offer a similar nutrition profile to fresh options and are often precut. While precut items may cost more, it may save money by reducing food waste.*

## PROTEIN

### Meat & [Alternatives](#)

- [Beef](#)
- [Bison](#)
- [Boca crumbles](#) (vegetable based)
- [Chicken](#)
- [Duck](#)
- [Eggs](#)
- [Goose](#)
- [Impossible burger](#) (plant based)
- [Lamb & mutton](#)
- [Pheasant](#)
- [Pork](#)
- [Rabbit](#)
- [Seitan](#) (meat substitute made from gluten)
- [Soy](#)
- [Tofu](#)
- [Tofurky](#)
- [Turkey](#)
- [Venison](#)
- [Wild boar](#)

*Many processed meats use salt and sugar to boost flavor and prolong shelf life. This is most common with jerky or cured meats. Take a moment to look at the nutrition label for carbs and sodium.*

### Seafood

- [Calamari](#)
- [Cod](#)
- [Crab](#)
- [Halibut](#)
- [Lobster](#)
- [Oysters](#)
- [Perch](#)
- [Salmon](#)
- [Scallops](#)
- [Shrimp](#)
- [Tilapia](#)
- [Trout](#)
- [Tuna](#)
- [Walleye](#)

*Raw (sushi grade), grilled, blackened, seared, and broiled are best. Avoid battered and deep fried options.*

### Legumes

- [Black beans](#)
- [Cannellini beans \(white\)](#)
- [Edamame](#)
- [Kidney beans](#)
- [Lentils \(chickpeas\)](#)
- [Lima beans](#)
- [Navy beans](#)
- [Pinto beans](#)
- [Soybeans \(green or black\)](#)
- [Split peas](#)

### Nuts

- [Almonds](#)
- [Brazil nuts](#)
- [Cashew](#)
- [Hazel nuts](#)
- [Macadamia nuts](#)
- [Pecans](#)
- [Pine nuts](#)
- [Pistachio](#)
- [Walnuts](#)
- Nut butters ([almond](#) & [cashew](#))

### Seeds

- [Chia seeds](#)
- [Flax seeds](#)
- [Hemp hearts](#)
- [Poppy seeds](#)
- [Pumpkin seeds](#)
- [Sesame seeds](#) & [tahini paste](#)
- [Sunflower seeds](#) & [Sunflower seed butter](#)

*Nuts and seeds have a lot of unsaturated fats. This type of fat can protect against heart disease when consumed in moderation. A handful in total per day of unsalted nuts and seeds is optimal. Flavor coatings often contain added sugars and salt. Be sure to read the nutrition label.*

## DAIRY & [ALTERNATIVES](#)

Dairy items contain natural sugars (mainly lactose) that can impact your blood sugar levels. Some products have added sugars, which can have an even bigger effect. Be sure to select an unsweetened variety when choosing an alternative to milk. Consume in moderation and read the nutrition label.

- [Butter / Earth Balance](#)
- [Cheeses](#)
- [Cottage cheese](#)
- [Cream cheese](#)
- [Ghee](#) (clarified butter with no milk solids)
- [Milk](#) (in moderation)
- [Greek yogurt](#) (no sugar added)
- [Ricotta](#)
- [Sour cream](#)
- [Unsweetened soy, cashew, coconut, almond](#), or [hemp milk](#)

## GRAINS

While the items listed are healthier for you than more processed options, they are still high in carbs. Eat in moderation and read your nutrition label.

### Breads, Tortillas, & Alternatives

#### Whole food options

- [Cabbage leaves - wrap](#)
- Cheese wrap ([Crystal Farm](#) or [Folios](#))

#### Recommended brands

- [Great Low Carb Bread Co](#)
- [Maria and Ricardo's](#) (tortillas)
- [Sourdough bread](#) (in moderation)
- [Thin Slim Foods](#) (pasta, bread, crackers)
- [Whole wheat pumpernickel bread](#)

### Oats & Alternatives

- [Amaranth](#)
- [Millet](#)
- [Steal cut oats](#)

### Pasta, Rice, & Alternatives

#### Whole food options

- [Brown rice](#) (in moderation)
- Riced cauliflower (freezer aisle of most grocers)
- [Quinoa](#) (in moderation)
- [Spaghetti squash](#)
- [Zucchini zoodles](#)

#### Recommended brands

- [Explore Cuisine](#) (pasta & rice)
- [Miracle Noodle](#) (pasta & rice)
- [Palmini](#) (pasta)
- [Thin Slim Foods](#) (pasta, bread, crackers)

*Alternative grain products often wear a “health halo”. They are marketed as “healthy” when they are not better than the original version or may be worse. Pay attention to total carbohydrates, added sugars, and the ingredients list. Moderation is key.*

## CONDIMENTS

Follow the links for low carb / keto friendly ideas. This list is not all inclusive. Read nutrition labels to identify low carb, minimal to no added sugars, and low sodium options.

- o [Capers](#)
- o [Cocktail sauce](#) (recipe)
- o [Horseradish](#)
- o [Hot sauce](#)
- o [Ketchup](#)
- o [Mayo](#) (avocado oil)
- o [Mustard](#)
- o [Oyster sauce](#)
- o [Soy sauce \(San J Tamari\)](#)
- o [Liquid aminos](#)
- o [Steak sauce](#) (gluten free options)
- o Sushi Ginger
- o [Sweet relish](#) (Mt. Olive)
- o [Tartar sauce](#)
- o [Teriyaki sauce](#)
- o [Wasabi](#)
- o Low sodium broth, stock, or bouillon

## Dips

- o [Artichoke dip](#)
- o [Roasted eggplant dip](#) (aka Baba Ganoush or Aborigine dip) (recipe)
- o [Hummus](#)
- o [Black bean dip](#) (recipe)
- o [Pesto](#)
- o [Queso dip](#) (Plant based)
- o [Salsa](#)
- o [Tzatziki sauce](#)

## Salad Dressings

- o [Blue cheese](#)

## Whole food options

- o [Balsamic vinegar](#)
- o Lemon or lime juice & pepper
- o Mustard & low sodium stock
- o Oil & Vinegar
- o Dill & Greek yogurt

## Recommended brands

- o [Chosen Foods](#)
- o [Garlic Gold](#)
- o [Primal Kitchen](#)
- o [Saucy Lips](#)
- o [Sir Kensington's](#)
- o [Tessemæ's Pantry](#)
- o [The New Primal](#)
- o [Walden Farms](#)

*Many of these brands offer even more condiment and food products. Review location information for local distributors or order online.*

## Sauces

- o [Alfredo](#)
- o [BBQ sauce](#)
- o [Curry](#) (recipe)
- o [Mole](#) (recipe)
- o [Mushroom](#) (recipe)
- o [Pizza](#)
- o [Pasta sauce](#)
- o [Peanut Thai sauce](#) (recipe)
- o [Romesco](#) (recipe)
- o [Satay](#) (recipe)
- o [Spaghetti](#)
- o [Stir fry](#) (recipe)
- o [White aka béchamel](#) (recipe)

## COOKING & BAKING

### Oils (smoke point)

- [Avocado oil](#) (375-400°F)
- [Canola oil](#) (400°F)
- [Extra virgin olive oil](#) (325-375°F)
- [Grapeseed oil](#) (390°F)
- Light or refined olive oil (465°F)
- [Vegetable oil](#) (400-450°F)

Smoke point means an oil has begun to burn. Many of the beneficial nutrients are destroyed at this point. It also creates flammable conditions and releases toxins.

### Flour Alternatives

- [Almond flour and meal](#)
- [Arrowroot](#)
- [Coconut flour](#)
- Dried bean flour ([black](#), [chickpea](#), [Cannellini \(white\)](#), [lima](#))
- [Oat bran](#)
- [Pumpkin seed flour](#)
- [Spelt flour](#)

*Flour alternatives may react differently than flour, especially in baked goods. Follow recipes closely.*

## SEASONINGS

### Asian

- Basil
- Chiles
- Cilantro
- Cinnamon
- Cloves
- Coriander
- Cumin
- Garlic
- Ginger
- Lemongrass
- Spearmint
- Star anise
- Turmeric

### Cajun

- Cayenne
- Black pepper
- Garlic powder
- Onion powder
- Oregano
- Paprika
- Salt
- Thyme
- White pepper

### Indian

- Black pepper
- Cardamom
- Cassia bark
- Clove
- Coriander
- Cumin
- Fenugreek
- Mustard seed
- Nutmeg and mace
- Saffron
- Turmeric

### Salt replacements

- [Dash](#)
- Garlic powder
- [Lawry's](#)

### Italian

- Basil
- Oregano
- Rosemary
- Thyme

### Mexican

- Anise Seeds
- Chili Powder (ancho)
- Cilantro
- Coriander
- Cumin
- Garlic Powder
- Allspice
- Oregano
- Vanilla
- Onion Powder
- Paprika (smoked)