

3 Delicious Diets for Diabetic Eating

By

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One of the biggest things that we need to take care of is our health. We often have to look out for our own health as well as the health of those we love.

The goal of eating is to stay strong and to take in foods that give you the energy you need to survive and stay healthy.

To do this, we must eat a balanced, healthy diet that promotes an active life. You want to eat food that gives your body the vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients that it needs to get through the day.

However, as centuries have passed, many of the foods that we once considered “healthy” are now over-processed and contribute to health problems such as obesity, high blood pressure, and diabetes.

Diabetes.org states that in 2012, over 29 million Americans were afflicted with diabetes. This is almost ten percent of the American population.

This rate had risen since 2010, in which only about 26 million Americans had diabetes. This is a scary rise in statistics.

Additionally, Diabetes.org listed diabetes as the seventh leading cause of death in Americans in 2010.

It’s time that we take a closer look at the foods that we’re putting into our bodies; it’s time that we recognize how these specific foods are affecting us.

Although it’s important to start at the beginning and promote a healthy diet at a young age, it becomes increasingly more important that you watch what you are putting into your body as you age.

As you grow older, you become more susceptible to obesity, and unfortunately, obesity can lead to diabetes.

It can be easy to reach for processed foods and “quick fixes” for hunger. But you must stop and think about the big picture. You must recognize how the foods you are putting into your body are contributing to your health, or the lack thereof.

Think of it this way. If you have an allergy to cats, more often than not, you will probably go out of your way to avoid contact with these animals because you know that it affects your health negatively.

If a friend invites you over to his or her place, you might first ask if he or she has a cat. If you chose to go over there, you might take some allergy medication or a few puffs from your inhaler before leaving your house.

You would also most likely never decide to own a cat unless you know for certain that you would be able to keep your allergies at bay. If not, owning a cat would make you miserable. With the cat in your home, you would constantly be exposed to something that makes you feel sick.

The same is true for most people with food allergies, especially when these allergies are so severe that they are life threatening. If your allergy requires you to carry an EpiPen, you're probably going to take specific food precautions when you go out to eat.

These precautions might include researching the menu, asking the waiter any questions about the contents of various dishes, and making it absolutely clear to the kitchen staff that you have a life threatening allergy.

All of these actions will help to inform the staff that they must be particularly careful when preparing your food.

Sure, it can be exhausting taking such thorough precautions, but when something seriously affects your health, you want to make sure that you do everything in your power to eliminate any potential threats and to stay well.

If people are willing to be this cautious with things such as allergies, why are they often so negligent when it comes to their nutrition?

Obesity and diabetes are just as real and can be just as crippling as any allergy. Yet, many people do not take the necessary precautions to avoid these diseases.

They assume that they can eat whatever they want and not face any negative consequences.

Perhaps they learned these bad eating habits at a young age, or they picked them up as an adult. It's easy to fall off of the wagon when you don't have a parent around telling you to eat your vegetables and to lay off the junk food.

Too much of any one thing is bad. Moderation and balance is key for a healthy diet.

This means that you must both limit the *amount* of what you take in and ensure that you are eating the right *kinds* of foods for your health.

Many people eat mindlessly. They chose foods that they know are less healthy because they subconsciously decide that taste is more important than health. On top of that, they then eat way too much of these unhealthy foods.

The funny thing is that eating healthy doesn't have to be boring or tasteless. Rather, there are many healthy and delicious options available that promote a longer, happier life.

Over time, these unhealthy habits add up. Again, moderation is key. Your body has its limits, and it can only take so much before it starts to fall apart.

Take a few minutes and think about the answers to the following questions.

Are you eating for your health? Or do you primarily eat to satisfy your appetite?

Do you reach for healthy snacks, such as fruits, vegetables, and proteins? Or do you take the easy way out and simply head toward the vending machine for a bag of chips or candy?

When it comes to meal times, do you prepare healthy meals, or do you find that you often go overboard with carbohydrates and bad fats? Are your meals balanced and moderate?

When you look at your plate, what do your portion sizes look like? Are they bigger than a clenched fist? Is your plate comprised of healthy foods, such as lean proteins and vegetables, or do you consistently heap on piles of carbs?

Are you content with your weight and level of health? If you're currently suffering from diabetes, are you eating the best diet for your overall wellbeing? Are you taking in foods that are rich in vitamins, protein, and fiber?

How do you feel on a daily basis? How's your energy level? Do you find that you're alert and ready to tackle the day, or do you typically feel tired, sluggish, and unfocused?

Do you find that eating provides you with energy? Or do you generally feel "gross" or weighed down after meals?

If you're diabetic, do you feel as if you have your diabetes under control? Are you willing to make adjustments to your current diet so that you are better able to keep your blood glucose levels within a normal range?

Are you or a loved one at risk for becoming diabetic? Are you overweight? Do you suffer from high blood pressure? Does your family have a history of diabetes?

The site, www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov states, "Type 2 diabetes develops most often in middle-aged and older people who are also overweight or obese. The disease, once rare in youth, is becoming more common in overweight and obese children and adolescents.

Scientists think genetic susceptibility and environmental factors are the most likely triggers of type 2 diabetes.”

If you are currently diabetic or are susceptible to contracting diabetes, it’s critical that you take care of yourself and eat to support your health.

Fortunately, there are a variety of diet plans that you can use to help you keep your diabetes under control. In fact, some diabetics even thrive under these specific plans.

We’re going to take a deeper look at each of these diet solutions. Read these carefully, and decide which one will work best for you and your family.

Remember, you don’t have to go through diabetes alone. There’s no need to feel excluded because of your illness.

Many scientists point out that these healthy plans can *and should* be adopted by most people, and not just diabetics or people suffering with health problems such as obesity or high blood pressure.

Through slightly different methods, each of these plans promotes a healthy life. They share certain characteristics and offer different approaches to healthy living.

Regardless of whether you have diabetes, are trying to prevent becoming diabetic, or simply want to live a healthier life, each of these diets will offer effective benefits.

You will notice the changes that take place within your body after trying out one or more of these diet plans.

You are likely to discover that your blood glucose levels stay within a normal range on a more consistent basis. As an additional bonus, you might even drop a few pounds!

Again, as a diabetic, there’s no need to feel limited or excluded. You can enjoy the same foods as those around you.

You must simply be cognizant of what types of foods – and how much of them – you’re putting in your body.

Overall, you’ll notice that each of these diets attempts to cut out excessive carbohydrates and other foods that are heavily processed.

You’ll also notice that each of these plans essentially attempts to get back to basics. All three plans focus on healthy, natural options that provide your body with the tools that it needs to run at its best.

If you've grown up eating and enjoying carbohydrates and manufactured foods, it can be jolting to cut down on these items. But, in the long run, you will thank yourself for making the necessary changes to improve your health.

Lastly, even though these diets emphasize a decrease in carbohydrates and processed foods, there are still a wide (and tasty) variety of other options that you can eat.

Who knows? After giving these diets a try, you might even discover that you don't miss carbohydrates and other "trouble" foods as much as you anticipated.

Let's take a closer look.

1. The Vegan Diet

Essentially, vegans enjoy a diet free from animal meats (including fish) and dairy. They find sustenance from a diet rich in vegetables, fruits, grains, beans, and legumes.

You might be thinking, "No way. I can't survive without protein. I'll be ravenous all day long."

Although vegans don't take in protein by ingesting meat, they are able to find alternative ways to obtain their daily doses of needed protein.

For instance, instead of eating meat or fish, a vegan might enjoy some beans or nuts.

When you're eating a vegan diet, there are certain substitutes that you can make to ensure that you are getting proper amounts of protein, calcium, and other valuable nutrients.

MedicalNewsToday.com says, "Whole grains, vegetables, fruits, and legumes contain no cholesterol and are low in fat, especially saturated fats. They are also high in fiber and other nutrients."

This is excellent news for diabetics. These elements can also help to ward off problems such as high blood pressure and obesity.

Foods that are high in fiber are also very beneficial. They help to control blood glucose spikes and keep you fuller for longer. When eating a vegan diet, you may also notice improved digestion.

On top of this, Veganhealth.org sites a correlation between a vegan diet and lower percentages of type 2 diabetes.

Cutting out meats and dairy and increasing one's intake of fruits and vegetables has been proven to reduce the risk of certain diseases such as heart disease, obesity, cancer, and type 2 diabetes.

The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (pcrm.com) provided the following quote from Dr. Neal D. Barnard, who worked on a study noting the effect of a vegan diet on type 2 diabetics. He is also the author of the book, *Dr. Neal Barnard's Program for Reversing Diabetes*.

"The low-fat vegan diet was very effective at controlling blood sugar and with good side effects--weight loss, better digestion. And it's surprisingly easy. We actually asked people how they felt about it. Following a vegan diet was easier than people thought it would be. You don't have to count calories, carbohydrates, don't have to eliminate anything. Some things you're never going to eat at all--meats, eggs, cheese. If you go to Taco Bell, you can't eat meat but can have as many bean burritos as you want."

So, although you might be worried about taking the "no meat or dairy" plunge, you will find that you are still able to enjoy plenty of foods that fill you up.

2. The Paleo Diet

This diet plan really does go back to the basics – WAY back. The Paleo Diet is often referred to as the "Caveman Diet" because it focuses on eating only items that our ancestors would have ingested.

This means no dairy, grains, processed foods or sugars, legumes, starches, or alcohol. These foods are considered unnatural for your body to process.

Instead, this diet is based on a balanced intake of the following: lean proteins and seafood, fruits and vegetables, healthy fats from nuts and oils, and grass-fed meats.

The argument behind the Paleo Diet is that people these days are eating too many foods that our bodies were never meant to process. As a result, our system suffers.

As we mentioned earlier, these foods have contributed to an increase in obesity and additional health issues.

By returning to a "primal" diet, you cut out negative food choices and increase your intake of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants.

Another argument for this particular diet is that it will help you to lose weight. This is good news, especially since obesity is major a contributing factor to developing type 2 diabetes.

ThePaleoDiet.com says, “Losing just 5-10% of your body weight can help lower your blood glucose, total cholesterol, and blood pressure levels.”

So, to recap, this diet can help you to slim down, lower cholesterol, take in higher amounts of vitamins and minerals, and can aid in normalizing blood sugar levels.

Unlike the vegan diet, you can add meat back into the equation. But you must make sure that this meat is lean or grass-fed. Seafood is another tasty, and healthy, option.

One thing you’ll notice is that both of these diets strongly advocate eliminating dairy from your daily diet. Again, if you’re concerned about obtaining proper amounts of Vitamin D, there are other ways that you can get your daily dose.

For example, you can take vitamin supplements, or you can simply step outside for a few minutes each day to expose your body to Vitamin D from sunlight.

Like the vegan diet, this plan requires a bit of extra legwork and research. For example, you must find alternative methods for replacing the good elements within dairy. But for the most part, this diet plan is relatively simple.

Don’t focus on the elements that you are cutting out. Rather, focus on all of the wonderful foods and nutrients that you are putting into your body.

Imagine how much more “clean” this diet will feel compared to a diet rich in over-processed items.

Like the vegan diet, this diet focuses on the power of foods. If eaten in moderation, the foods you eat on this plan will give you the energy you need without weighing you down.

This diet plan is also similar to the low carb diet, which is the final plan we will discuss.

3. The Low Carb Diet

A low carb diet can be extremely helpful for both losing weight and improving your overall health.

Much like the other diets, you might worry about cutting out a food group. But again, there are ways to substitute for these cravings.

Similar to veganism, when cutting out a food group, you don’t have to worry about counting calories. You simply eat the remaining food groups in moderation, and enjoy!

You'll also find that by eating meals that are rich in protein and vegetables, that you are less likely to overeat and more likely to stay fuller for longer. As a result, you end up taking in fewer calories.

Carbohydrates are processed very quickly by your system. As a result, after eating them, you end up feeling hungry more often.

Proteins and fats take longer for your body to process. So, you end up feeling satiated and are less likely to run to the cupboard for a snack.

Also by pairing vegetables with your choice of protein, you add fiber to your meal, which also helps to curb hunger. These foods also give you plenty of positive nutrients!

By cutting out carbohydrates, your body creates less glucose, which is wonderful news for diabetics.

An added perk is that much of the weight that is lost on a low carb diet comes from the belly region. This is the fat that contributes to a myriad of health problems, including diabetes.

So, by cutting out carbs, you lose weight AND you decrease your chances of becoming diabetic – or, if you're already diabetic, it helps to keep your diabetes at bay.

Again, it all goes back to eating for energy as opposed to eating for appetite.

Breads, crackers, potato chips, candy, and other carbohydrates may seem appealing in the moment, especially when you're "starving," but you must consider which foods are going to fill you up, keep you full longer, and add to your overall health.

This diet plan is very simple to navigate when you're preparing your own food or eating out. You simply cut out carbs, and eat more protein and fats.

Unlike the vegan diet, you aren't searching for alternative sources of nutrients. Rather, you are ditching one unhealthy food group, and substituting other, healthier options. It's that simple.

For example, you may be tempted to add a bread portion to your dinner. Instead, pick another vegetable and add it to your plate.

The options are endless. You can make grilled chicken with a side of broccoli. Instead of adding a carb, choose a side salad, some beans, or a fruit.

For snacks, you can chomp on some nuts, prepare peanut butter and celery, or enjoy a hardboiled egg. Those are just a few ideas!

Just because you're cutting out an entire food group does not mean that your options are limited. Who knows, by thinking healthily and outside of the box, you might discover a new, perfect power snack!

Consideration

No matter who you are, you can benefit from any of these different diet plans.

Whether you are diabetic or are just looking out for your overall health, it's important to start with the food that you are putting into your body on a daily basis.

The hard truth is that many foods are simply not good for you. It can be difficult to make good choices when bad options are so accessible.

We live in an age where things are heavily processed and manufactured. It's easier to run to a fast-food restaurant and pay \$5 for a huge meal, than going to the grocery store, spending a few more dollars, and preparing a healthy meal for yourself.

Part of this mentality is simply a product of our day and age. There is a constant need for instant gratification. If you're not rushing to do one thing, you're rushing to do another.

As a result, our food choices often take a backseat.

But it's time for all of us to reprioritize. To be able to do all of the things that we want to do, we must be healthy.

Health must come first. This is a choice. This means being conscious of the amount and the quality of the foods that you put into your body.

It also means that you may need to adjust your eating habits and food choices. If you want to live a long, healthy, and happy life that is free from sickness, you have to start from the inside out.

You have to be aware of the things that you are putting into your body. You also have to be aware of what diet plan works best for you.

For example, you may have trouble staying away from meat. If that's the case, opt to try the Paleo Diet. If you're not happy with the results you find there, then switch to the Low Carb Diet. Who knows? After a month or so, you may be blown away by the vegan lifestyle!

The bottom line is that each of these diets tries to eliminate unhealthy elements, and by doing so, they improve your quality of life.

Each of these diets has proven effective for aiding diabetics and in preventing diabetes in those who are susceptible.

If you've tried a variety of options and haven't yet found a successful method for keeping your diabetes in check, it's time to try something new.

A diet plan requires thought, time, and effort. But it can pay off and improve your health.

To recap, here are the basics of each plan:

Vegan: No meat or dairy. Diet is full of "greens" or plant-based items, such as vegetables and fruits.

Paleo: The "Caveman Diet." If our ancestors didn't eat it, then we shouldn't either. This means no processed foods, and a diet rich in lean, grass-fed meats, vegetables, fruits, and more.

Low Carb: It's just like it sounds – you cut out the carbs. This means that you ingest a diet rich in proteins and fats.

As a reminder, these diets are not exclusively for those dealing with diabetes. Friends and family members can implement them as well.

This can be very helpful in your transition to eating healthier. When those around you are also eating healthier foods and changing their habits, it becomes easier for you to stay the course.

Futhermore, healthy eating isn't just for those who are currently suffering with an illness. *Every* person should be eating for a healthier life.

As we mentioned before, it's important to teach healthy eating habits at a young age. Instill this mindset within your children and loved ones. When you start early, it creates a positive foundation for the rest of their lives.

It becomes much harder to make adjustments as you grow older. In some cases, the health damage is already done. In a lot of instances, it's very hard to "teach an old dog new tricks" as far as healthy eating is concerned.

That said, once you decide to make a positive change, you might notice that you actually enjoy eating healthier foods. You might like the wide variety of tastes and the freshness of natural foods. On top of that, you'll appreciate the energy that these foods provide to you.

Make the change as soon as you can, and you'll be grateful that you took steps to improve your health and quality of life.

What are you waiting for? You only live once, and the sooner you take the reins on your health, the better. Pick a plan that interests you and see how your health improves!

For more information, be sure to check out our newsletter.

Thanks for reading, and have a great day!