

# INFORMATION

## FOR PEOPLE WITH DIABETES

### SUMMER CELEBRATION SUGGESTIONS

July is here, and that means the Fourth of July and other cookouts and picnics throughout the summer, and perhaps a bit of alcohol. Many of the food options at traditional barbecues are not particularly diabetes-friendly. Fortunately, you can come up with a game plan for successfully managing your diabetes while fully enjoying the summer festivities.

#### Eat before you go.

If you arrive hungry, chances are you will snack on whatever is within easy reach. Greasy, salty chips, sugar-filled cookies, and mayonnaise-laden salads are not the best way to begin a barbecue. Eating an average-sized meal a few hours prior to attending will enable you to better control your snacking. Balancing your carbs, fitting in some protein and vegetables, and going easy on the fried foods can help you enjoy the day without soaring blood glucose levels and feeling overstuffed.

Bring a healthy dish. You can't control what other people are serving. If you're going to a cookout or to a party, offer to bring a dish or two that are reasonable in terms of carbohydrate and fat. Some good options include:

- skewered chicken kabobs and veggies for grilling
- diabetes-friendly cole slaw (see our recipe)
- vegetable platter containing celery sticks, carrot sticks, cauliflower, and broccoli
- a big salad with mixed greens, cherry tomatoes, cucumber slices, and carrot shavings tossed with a dash of olive oil and balsamic vinegar
- a tray with whole grain crackers, thin slices of low-fat cheese, and hummus
- fresh fruit platter for dessert

When you prepare salads, mix them with mustard, olive oil, plain Greek yogurt, or fat-free mayonnaise. Leave out the salt and add flavorful herbs such as garlic powder, fresh or dried rosemary, dill, and basil.

#### Beware of hidden sugars.

Watch the sauces like ketchup, which contains a lot of sugar. BBQ sauce can be loaded with sugar so it is best to find dishes that have a smokier sauce. Mustards are okay and so is mayonnaise, especially the low-fat variety.

Gauge your plate. Overindulging every now and then is OK. Go ahead and savor a burger and some potato salad. But at the same time, keep an eye on how much carbohydrate you eat. Load up on salad and other vegetable dishes and plan ahead: If you really want a slice of that pie, skip the corn on the cob. You know how your body reacts to various foods. For example, it might be OK for you to have a little watermelon – just make it a small slice, enough to satisfy your cravings without going overboard.

#### Diabetes-friendly cole slaw

##### INGREDIENTS

- |                                   |                            |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| ✓ 4 CUPS SHREDDED CABBAGE         | ✓ 1/3 CUP VINEGAR          |
| ✓ 2 CARROTS, COARSELY SHREDDED    | ✓ 1 TABLESPOON OLIVE OIL   |
| ✓ 1/2 CUP CELERY (FINELY CHOPPED) | ✓ 1 TABLESPOON SUGAR       |
| ✓ 1/4 CUP ONION (FINELY CHOPPED)  | ✓ 1/2 TEASPOON CELERY SEED |
|                                   | ✓ 1/4 TEASPOON DRY MUSTARD |
|                                   | ✓ 1/4 TEASPOON SALT        |

DIRECTIONS: COMBINE ALL INGREDIENTS IN A LARGE BOWL AND MIX THOROUGHLY. CHILL AT LEAST AN HOUR AND THEN SERVE.



## Watch the alcohol.

As the saying goes, everything in moderation. Aim for no more than two servings of alcohol per day if you're a man, and no more than one serving if you're a woman. Always eat something when you drink, too. You're also more likely to become dehydrated when you drink alcohol, so be especially vigilant about drinking plenty of water. Drinking alcohol on an empty stomach (and in the hot weather) can increase your risk for low blood glucose if you take insulin or certain types of diabetes pills.

## Get your activity in.

Get your day off to a good start by exercising in the morning. It's not only a good way to beat the heat, but also, the early workout will help your blood glucose levels stay at a safe level during the day, and you may even find that you're less likely to overeat. Go for a walk after eating – bring friends and family along to make it more enjoyable and to promote their good health, too. If you don't want to leave the festivities, throw a baseball around or join a game of backyard volleyball.

## Stay hydrated.

If you're going to be outdoors at a parade, fireworks, a cookout, or the beach, be sure to drink plenty of fluids. People with diabetes are more likely to become dehydrated than people without, and the hot weather on top of that certainly doesn't help.

While there are no hard and fast rules for how much liquid you need to drink, aiming for anywhere from 8 to 13 cups of fluid each day is a good rule of thumb (and more if you're exercising, working in the hot weather, or drinking alcohol). Watch out for signs of dehydration, such as dizziness, lightheadedness, fatigue, thirst, confusion, and palpitations. To avoid dehydration, keep a water bottle nearby at all times and drink even if you don't feel thirsty.

*Remember to keep your focus on friends, family, and fun rather than food. If you do deviate from your plan, don't be too hard on yourself. It will be easier to get back on track once the festivities are over.*

### Sources:

<http://everydaydiabetes.com/fourth-of-july/>  
<https://www.diabetesselfmanagement.com/blog/getting-fired-up-for-the-fourth-of-july/>  
<https://www.adwidiabetes.com/articles/perfect-4th-of-july-bbq>

## Wear sunscreen.

Applying sunscreen before heading for the outdoors is good advice in general. Be aware that taking certain medicines can cause photosensitivity reactions, which can lead to a host of skin problems, including a risk for sunburn. Glyburide, glipizide, diuretics, some antibiotics, and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (such as ibuprofen) increase your risk. Ask your pharmacist if any of the medicines that you take are likely to increase your sensitivity to sunlight.



## Keep your meter handy.

Checking your blood glucose more often than usual is a smart idea when you're in the heat or attending a food-related event. High or low blood glucose levels can put a damper on the fun, and you're more likely to have "ups and downs" on special occasions, due to overeating, alcohol, hot weather, and a change in your usual schedule. Keep your meter and test strips (along with your insulin, if you take it) out of the sun and in a cool, shady spot.

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