

# **Healthy Eating for Elders:** Nutrition and Diabetes<sup>1</sup>

#### Jennifer Hillan<sup>2</sup>

ENAFS Elder Nutrition and Food Safety

A healthy diet, along with exercise and medication, can help control diabetes and reduce the risks for diabetes complications. It will also help people at high risk for diabetes reduce the chance of getting the disease. Here are some tips for a healthy diet:

#### **Choose Low Fat Foods**

Limit the amount of fat you eat by choosing more low fat foods such as:

- ♦ beans
- fruits and vegetables
- low fat milk, cheese, and yogurt
- lean meats, fish, skinless poultry



#### **Limit Salt and Sodium**

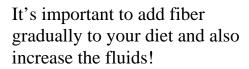


Reduce salt and high sodium foods such as canned and processed food. Instead, use herbs and other spices to give your food zest!

#### **Add Fiber**

To keep "regular" and reduce the risk for some diabetes complications, choose more:

- fruits and vegetables
- ♦ whole grains
- ♦ beans, lentils, peas





## **Control the Carbohydrates**

Limit high sugar foods such as cakes, pies, cookies, donuts, and soda. Work with a dietitian to learn about foods that contain carbohydrates and how to fit them into your meal plan.

## Alcohol in Moderation, if at all

If you drink alcohol, consume no more than one drink (for women) or two drinks (for men) twice a week. One drink is:

- ♦ 5 ounces of wine
- ♦ 12 ounces of beer
- ♦ 1 ½ ounces of liquor

It's best to drink alcohol with food, not by itself. Check with your doctor or pharmacist about possible interactions with your medications.

# Variety is the Spice of Life!

Enjoy a variety of foods from each food group every day.

Work with a registered dietitian to make a flexible meal plan just for you.

This document, FCS8612-Eng, is one in a series of the Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611. Publication date: March 2004. This leaflet was developed with funding from the Florida Department of Elder Affairs in partnership with state, county, and local agencies. Please visit the EDIS Web site at http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu

Jennifer Hillan, MSH, RD, LD/N, former ENAFS nutrition educator/trainer, Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611. Reviewed by Linda B. Bobroff, PhD, RD, LD/N, professor, University of Florida.