

## Best Foods for Adult Diabetics

**Q:** *"My spouse was just diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. As the cook in the family, I'm interested in finding out the best diabetic foods that he should now be eating. And where I can put my hands on some good diabetic cookbooks?"*

**A:** Eating healthy is important for everyone but it's even more important for the nearly 26 million Americans who have diabetes - half of whom are over the age of 60. See below for more great foods to serve.

## Diabetic Super Foods

A healthy diet, coupled with regular exercise and medication (if needed) are the keys to keeping your spouse's blood sugar under control. To help meet your spouse's new dietary needs, the American Diabetes Association (ADA) offers a list of top 10 super foods for type 1 and type 2 diabetics.

These are foods that contain nutrients that are vitally important to people with diabetes, such as calcium, potassium, magnesium and vitamins A, C and E. They're also high in fiber which will help your spouse feel full longer and keep his glycemic index low so his blood sugar won't spike. And they'll help keep his blood pressure and cholesterol in check, which are also critical for diabetics. Here's what they recommend he eat plenty of.

Beans: Kidney, pinto, navy, black and other types of beans are rich in nutrients and high in soluble fiber, which will keep his blood sugar steady and can help lower his cholesterol.

Dark green leafy vegetables: Spinach, collard greens, mustard greens, kale and other dark, leafy green veggies are nutrient-dense, low in calories and carbohydrates. Your spouse can't eat too much of these.

Citrus fruits: Grapefruit, oranges and other citrus fruits are rich in vitamin C, which helps heart health. Stick to whole fruits instead of juice. Fiber in whole fruit slows sugar absorption so your spouse will get the citrus fruit nutrients without sending his blood sugar soaring.

Sweet potatoes: High in vitamin A and fiber and low in glycemic index, sweet potatoes won't raise your spouse's blood sugar at the same level as a regular potato.

Berries: Whole, unsweetened blueberries, strawberries and other berries are full of antioxidants, vitamins and fiber. Choose fresh or frozen berries for salads, smoothies or cereal.

Tomatoes: Raw or cooked, this low-calorie super food offers vital nutrients like vitamin C, iron and vitamin E. Serve sliced, steamed, broiled or stewed, as a side dish, in salads, soups, casseroles or other dishes.

Fish with omega-3 fatty acids: Salmon, mackerel, herring, lake trout, sardines and albacore tuna are high in omega 3 fatty acids that help both heart health and diabetes. But stay away from the breaded and deep fat fried variety.

Whole grains: Pearled barley, oatmeal, breads and other whole-grain foods are high in fiber and contain nutrients such as magnesium, chromium, folate and omega 3 fatty acids.

Nuts: An ounce of nuts can go a long way in providing your spouse important "healthy fats" along with hunger management. They also contain a nice dose of magnesium and fiber but don't overdo it. Nuts are high in calories so a small handful each day is enough.

Fat-free milk and yogurt: These dairy foods provide the calcium and vitamin D your spouse needs and they'll also help curb cravings and between-meal snacks.

## For More Information:

For additional information on healthy food choices for diabetics, including hundreds of free recipes, visit the ADA Web site at [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org) - click on "Food & Fitness," or call 800-342-2383 (press option #4) and ask them to mail you a copy of their free booklet "What Can I Eat?" The ADA also offers a wide variety of diabetic cookbooks that you can purchase through their online store at [shopdiabetes.org](http://shopdiabetes.org) or 800-232-6455.