

Healthy Eating

Better Blood Glucose Control

Designed by dietitian students:

George Oprea
Luis Taparosky
Shirley Da Costa





Why Diet Matters in Type 2 Diabetes

- Improves blood glucose control
- Help with weight management
- Reduce risk of complications
- Diet and physical activity reduce the risk of T2DM by 58%



Can we live without sugar?

Sugar is a type of carbohydrate and is the primary source of **energy** in our bodies.

In the UK, many of us consume a diet that is **too high** in free sugars, which may have **negative health implications**.

Types of sugar

- **Naturally occurring sugar** (e.g., found in fruits, vegetables, plants and dairy products)
- **Commercially produced** in large quantities and **added to foods**, known as '**free sugars**'

Naturally Occurring Sugar

Whole fruits and vegetables contain fibre, vitamins, minerals and some naturally occurring sugar.

These are a **healthy** alternative to foods high in free sugars and fat.

Pure fruit juices and smoothies are often unsweetened, as the sugar comes naturally from the fruit.

However, free sugars are released during the juicing process, so intake should be **limited** to a small 150ml glass, once a day.

It will also count towards one of your **5-a-day**.

British Dietetic Association (BDA). Sugar and your health





Dietary Sources of Free Sugar

Foods that contain **high levels** of free sugars are:

- **Sugar-sweetened drinks** (including fizzy drinks, juice drinks, energy drinks, squashes and alcoholic drinks)
- **Cereal-based products** (biscuits, cakes, pastries and sweetened breakfast cereals)
- **Confectionery** (chocolate, chocolate spread and sweets)
- **Dairy products** (sweetened flavoured milk and yoghurts)
- **Savoury products** can also contain some sugar (tomato ketchup or pre-prepared sauces. It is important to read food labels.



Why Fibre Matters

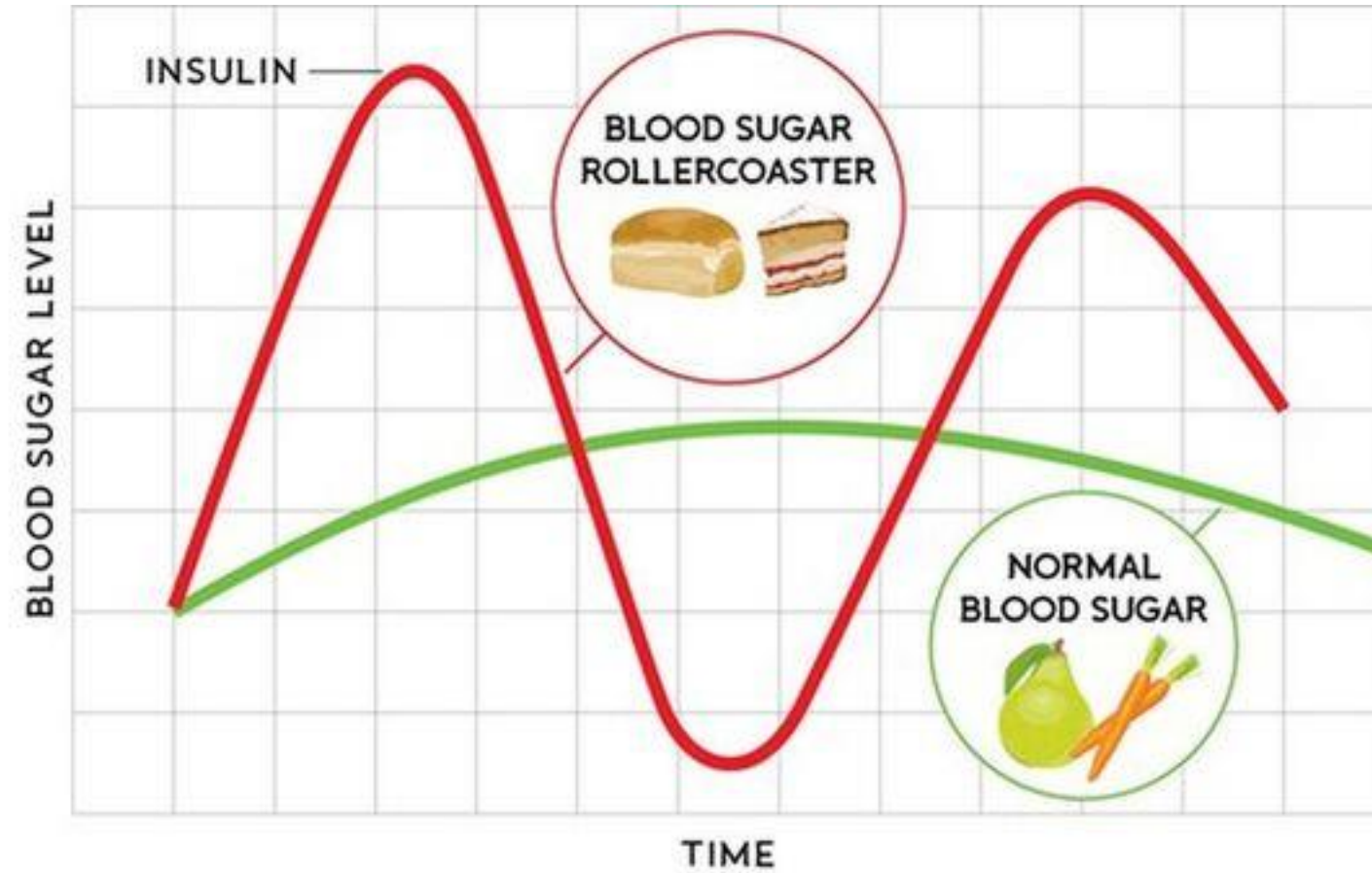
There is strong evidence that eating plenty of fibre is associated with a **lower risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and bowel cancer.**

- Slows down sugar absorption → **steadier blood glucose.**
- Keeps you **fuller for longer** → helps with weight control.
- Helps with **digestion** and **prevent constipation.**

Sources:

- Whole grains (oats, brown rice, wholemeal bread)
- Beans, lentils, chickpeas
- Fruits (with skin), vegetables

Aim: It is recommended to consume at least **30g fibre/day** (adults).



How Foods Affect Your Blood Sugar

Glycaemic Index (GI): measures how quickly a food raises blood glucose after eating.

High GI foods (cause quick spikes): white bread, white rice, sugary cereals, sweets, pastries, dried fruit.

Lower GI foods (gentler rise): oats, wholemeal pasta, beans, lentils, most fruits, non-starchy veg.

Combining foods helps: Pair carbs with fibre, protein, or healthy fat → slows down absorption.

Eating regular meals/snacks can also prevent big ups and downs.

Small Changes, Big Benefits

Instead of...	Try...	Why?
White bread	Wholemeal bread	More fibre, slower sugar rise
Sugary cereal	Porridge oats + fruit	No added sugar, more fibre
Fizzy drink	Water / Sparkling water + lemon	No free sugars
Flavoured yoghurt	Plain yoghurt + berries	Less sugar, more nutrients

NHS. Eight tips for healthy eating.



Balanced Plate Method

Why

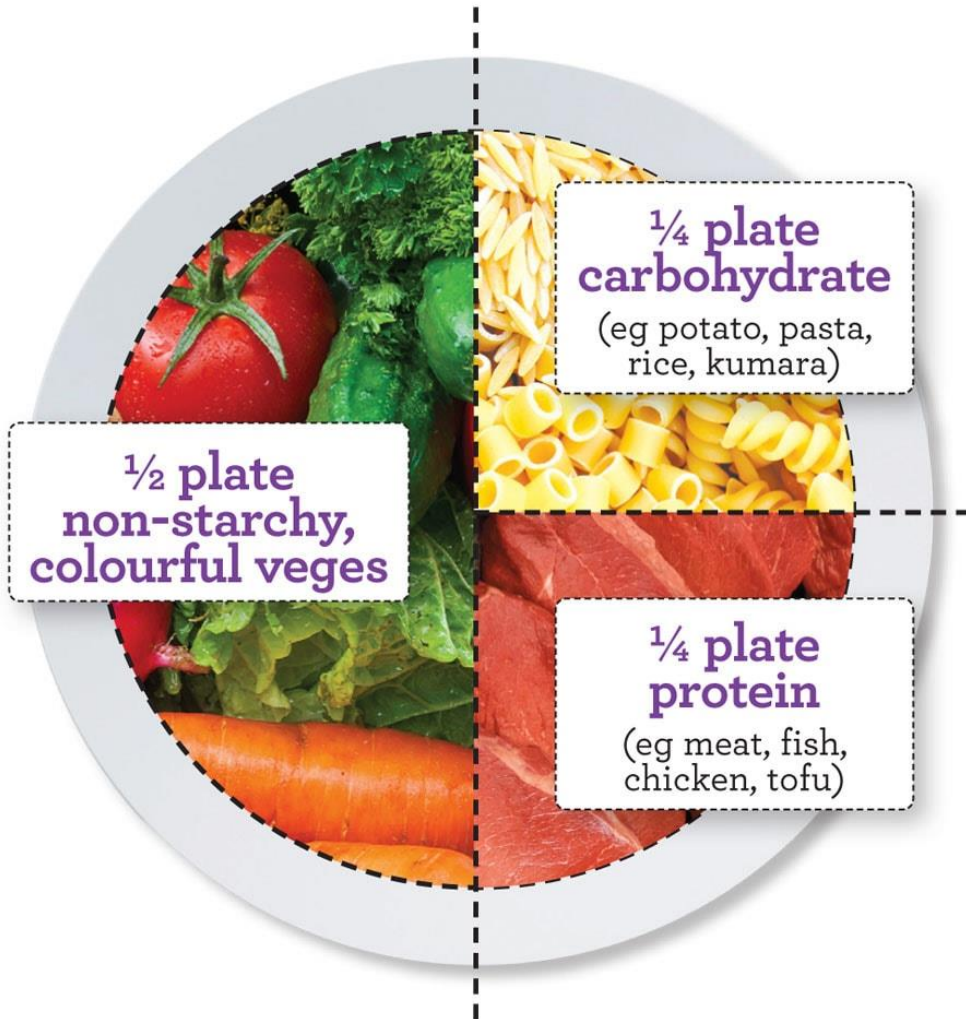
Helps slow sugar release, keeps you full longer. How to build it:

½ plate: **Non-starchy veg** (broccoli, carrots, leafy greens, peppers).

¼ plate: **Lean protein** (chicken, eggs, fish, lentils, tofu).

¼ plate: **High-fibre carbs** (brown rice, wholemeal bread, sweet potato, beans).

“It’s not about cutting out everything you enjoy — it’s about building meals that keep your sugar steady so you have more energy and protect your health.”



Recipes Example

Breakfast: Overnight oats with chia seeds + berries



Lunch: Lentil & vegetable soup with wholegrain toast



Dinner: Grilled chicken/salmon with quinoa and roasted vegetables

Snack: Greek yoghurt with nuts



“Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food”

Hippocrates (400BC)

