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4 Surprising Foods You Should Avoid with Type 2 Diabetes

Why You Should Avoid These Everyday Foods



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Written or reviewed by a board-certified physician. See About.com's [Medical Review Board](#).

One of my least favorite things is telling my patients what *not to* eat. I like to focus on the positives and educate my patients about the plethora of good foods that you *can* eat. But, from time to time, I find that some people are grateful when they are told that certain foods are "off limits." The types of foods that I may deem "off limits" might surprise you because what folks think is healthy may not always be the best choice.

Some of these foods are obvious, because they contain added sugars - for instance, candies, cookies, soda, etc. Other foods of which you should be wary are foods rich in carbohydrate and/or sugar with limited fiber, and that are lacking in lacking in nutrition (vitamins and minerals). Here are some examples:

Whole Wheat Bagels: Although this type of bagel is whole wheat, that doesn't mean it has less carbohydrates than it's white counterpart. One bagel is equivalent to eating about 4-6 slices of bread. Bagels are lacking in filling fiber and protein - you are likely to be hungry a few hours later which can negatively impact your blood sugars and weight. To make this a healthier choice, decide to eat 1/2 (scooped out) and top it with a few scrambled egg whites and a vegetable of your choice. My favorite combination is 3 egg whites with 1/3 avocado, and 1/2 cup spinach - this adds protein, fiber and healthy fat. Some studies suggest a larger, higher [protein](#), higher fat breakfast may help to reduce HgbA1c.

Whole Wheat Pretzels: Whole wheat pretzels may seem like a good choice because they are whole wheat, but pretzels are rich in sodium and lack nutritional value. One serving of honey wheat pretzels will cost you ~110 calories, 1 g fat, 200mg sodium, 24 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber and 3 g protein. Pretzels also have a high glycemic index which can affect blood sugar control. The American Diabetes Association suggests that substituting low glycemic index food for high glycemic index food may improve blood sugar control. When choosing a snack it's best to choose foods that are rich in fiber and protein. For example: an apple with peanut butter or carrots with hummus. For more tips on snacking: <http://diabetes.about.com/od/nutrition/fl/All-About-Snacking-with-Type-2-Diabetes.htm>

Dried fruit (even unsweetened): Dried fruit, especially dried fruit that is covered with yogurt, chocolate, or otherwise sweetened is loaded with sugar for a very small portion. Because dried fruit is condensed, the serving is very small. When possible, it's best to eat whole fruit and limit your portions to about 2-3 max per day. One serving of raisins is only two tablespoons. Alternatively, you can eat 1 1/4 cup whole strawberries for the same amount of calories and quadruple the amount of fiber. Learn how to incorporate fruit into your meal plan: <http://diabetes.about.com/od/nutrition/fl/If-I-Have-Type-2-Diabetes-Can-I-Eat-Fruit.htm>

Margarine: Not all margarine is created equal. The intent of margarine is to reduce saturated fat and calories. However, some margarine spreads are made with partially hydrogenated oil (trans fat). Avoid trans fat because it acts similarly to saturated fat. When choosing a margarine, be sure to read the label. If the label lists "hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oil" you should avoid it. Aim to spread whole grain bread with heart healthy fat alternatives like hummus, avocado and nut butter.