

# Conquering the Grocery Store

## Planning Ahead can Help Diabetes Management

**G**rocery shopping is not usually at the top of anyone's list of fun activities. For people with diabetes, it can seem especially overwhelming when considering the carbohydrates and making healthy choices. However, with a little planning, grocery shopping can be a great tool to help meet goals, like managing blood sugar levels, and losing weight. Planning ahead and shopping carefully are two great ways to take control. It will help you choose **more healthy foods**, as well as, **fewer foods that have little or no nutritional value**. You won't have to rely on your willpower back at home if you have healthier options available when you are ready to eat.



Successful grocery shopping is about focusing on food that is healthy, nutritious and tasty. It also helps to learn how different foods affect your blood sugar.

**Make a List**— Try to make a list of the items you need **BEFORE** you go. Think of the meals you'll make or want to try. Organize your list by food groups; meat, dairy, fruit, etc. Do you have any vegetables on your list? If not, add some. Consider using a smartphone shopping app.

**Eat before you go** – It's rarely a good idea to shopping when you are hungry. You are more likely to make poor or unhealthy choices. Try eating a healthy meal or snack before you go.

**Think inside the box, bag or can** – Fresh is great for fruits and vegetables, but there are other options when it is not in your budget or in season. Canned, frozen or dried. If it is canned, look for “low sodium” or drain and rinse before using. Look for fruits packed in juice rather than heavy syrup.

**Read the Labels** – Look past “sugar free” and “low fat” claims. Take the time to read the label specifically the serving size and carbohydrates.

**Consider the carbohydrates** – looking at sugar content is not as important as the “Total Carbohydrates”. Focus on the total carbohydrates **per serving**, and then make sure not to take in more than you actually need. Aim for 30-60 grams per meal: 30 grams for smaller meals and 45-60 for larger meals.

**Focus on fiber** – Choosing a whole grain bread, pasta or cereal is a good idea. Look for those that are a good source of fiber, 2.5 grams per serving, or a high fiber source, 5 grams per serving. A healthy diet includes 25-30 grams of fiber per day. Other good sources of fiber are beans, vegetables and fresh fruits.

**Hunt for healthy fats** – Fats are an important part of your diet. While cutting fat intake is important, learning to limit bad fats (butter, lard and fried foods) and include heart healthy fats (almonds, avocado and olive oil) is important.