

Diabetes Food Myths

True or False



People with diabetes should not eat potatoes.

It's false! People with diabetes **CAN** enjoy potatoes.

People with diabetes don't have to give up potatoes; just balance them as part of a meal. When potatoes (a starchy vegetable) are part of a meal,

try to balance the plate by including **non-starchy** vegetables such as a lettuce salad, green beans, or broccoli.

Potatoes are rich in nutrients--they're higher in potassium than bananas -- and they also provide dietary fiber and are good sources of vitamin C.

When eating potatoes, remember portion size and be honest about quantity. One serving of potatoes is roughly the size of your fist, or about 1/2 cup. Baked and boiled potatoes are the healthiest choices. Instead of opting for potato chips or mashed potatoes loaded with butter and sour cream, try salsa, spicy mustard, or Greek yogurt to boost flavor.

To make oven-fried potatoes:

Cut 4 medium potatoes or sweet potatoes lengthwise into wedges. Drizzle the wedges with one tablespoon olive oil or canola oil. Bake wedges in an even layer on a baking sheet at 375 degrees F for 50 minutes. Makes 4 servings.

Per serving: 164 calories, 3.5 g total fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 8 mg sodium, **31 g carbs**, 4 g protein



Fresh produce is always better than frozen.

It's false! Sometimes frozen fruits and vegetables, without added sugar or sodium (salt), actually have more nutrients than fresh products.

It depends on where you buy the food and how far it has traveled since harvest. If you purchase produce from a local farmer, fresh may provide more nutrients as long as you prepare and eat the food quickly. If produce in your grocery store came from another country and took a week to get to get there, frozen is likely better.

All food, no matter how it is processed or stored, will lose nutrients -- vitamins and minerals -- over time. The carbohydrate and fat content remain basically the same. Canned produce, as long as you choose reduced-sodium options is another good option.

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True or False



People with diabetes should not eat fruit because it raises blood glucose.

It's false! People with diabetes should eat fruit.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that everyone, including people with diabetes, eat about **2 cups** of fruit per day. While it's true that any food that contains carbohydrate (including fruit) will raise blood sugar, it doesn't mean you should eliminate healthy sources of carbohydrate from your diet. One way to help keep your blood glucose under control is to make sure your portions of carbohydrate-containing foods aren't too large.

When choosing fruit, opt for fresh fruit, frozen fruit with no added sugar, or canned fruit in light syrup or 100 percent fruit juice.

Another plus is that fruit and vegetables are low in calories making them a better snack option.



People with diabetes shouldn't drink fruit juice.

It's false!

People with diabetes can fit fruit juice into their meal plans; however, be aware that whole fruits are more nutritious than juice because of the

fiber whole fruits contain.

Juice tends to spike blood sugar more quickly because a liquid is digested more quickly than a solid; when digestion is faster, you will get a faster rise in blood sugar.

You can have juice; just **limit it to 4 ounces or ½ cup**. You can also try diluting juice with water or ice to enjoy a less-concentrated fruit drink. And, remember, fresh juices are always better than frozen concentrates because of the added sugars.