

Hooray! You are a college student! It is time to make new friends and start the next chapter in your life. It is also the time to start making your own decisions on what to eat. Having Type 1 diabetes means you have a special relationship with food and are more aware of how food affects your blood sugar. This can give you a big advantage when navigating the food choices on campus.

The first two weeks of school might be a little crazy as you figure out your new schedule. Once things calm down, come up with a plan for when and where you will eat each day. It may also take a few weeks to see how your body reacts to a new schedule and new foods. Checking your blood sugar more often during this time can help determine if you are counting carbs correctly and to see how different food combinations affect your blood glucose. It is important to brush up on your carb counting skills. You can't ask your parents to help you when you are miles away, and you will find that nutritious foods don't always come with a label.

### **Living on campus?**

Most schools have an on-campus dining hall office, and it is a good idea to check out the meal plan options and introduce yourself to the campus dietitian or dining service representative. They can help you choose the best meal plan that works for you. Even if you live off-campus, you may find yourself eating many of your meals on campus depending on your class schedule.

- Some colleges have “all-you-can-eat” style dining halls. This can be a little overwhelming when you have to start counting carbs and figuring out your insulin dose on your own. Most dining halls have the nutrition facts posted in the dining hall or on their website. Many colleges have teamed up with *MyFitnessPal* to help students, faculty and staff track food intake, and this can be a great resource for counting carbs.
- Ask someone serving food to help determine portion sizes. Measuring cups and recipes are available in order to determine the ingredients and portion sizes. Dining hall staff members enjoy interacting with students, so don't be shy about asking for help.
- Fill up on vegetables and protein. Sometimes students fall into a pattern of choosing familiar foods like pizza and fast food meals. Use the dining hall to try new foods and increase your intake of nourishing entrees that you can't make in your dorm.
- If you have a refrigerator in your room, it is nice to have a few packaged things to eat, like peanut butter, protein bars, string cheese, nuts and yogurt for snacks or quick meals. It is also important to have some juice on hand to treat low blood sugars. Label your juice so that no one accidentally drinks it!

## Living off-campus?

Living off campus means that you have a full size kitchen and can cook your own meals. Learning to cook a few nutritious simple meals before you come to college can be a huge plus.

- Take turns cooking with friends and roommates. Eating together is more fun and can be a nice bonding experience with a new friend.
- Stock your refrigerator with plenty of “grab and go” snacks and drinks to treat low blood sugars.
- Just because you have a kitchen doesn’t mean you have to cook gourmet meals every night. Keep some prepared meals in your freezer for those busy nights studying. Make a side salad or pair it with fresh fruit and some low fat dairy for a healthy meal. Remember, learning to eat while in college is difficult for many students. If you find you are spending too much time worrying about your intake or weight, ask for help. Counseling and dietitian services are available on most campuses. Contact the student health center or the campus dining office for help.

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*Updated 5/18/20*

*Disclaimer: This document is not intended to take the place of the care and attention of your personal physician or other professional medical services. Our aim is to promote active participation in your care and treatment by providing information and education. Questions about individual health concerns or specific treatment options should be discussed with your physician.*

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## Recommended

[Exercise](#)

[Diabetes Burnout](#)

[No Exceptions](#)

[Building a Support Network](#)

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## **Sources**

[\*The 5 Most Common Party Foods and What It Means for Blood Sugar Management, Beyond Type 1\*](#)

[\*What to Eat, Beyond Type 1\*](#)

[\*Nutrition Basics and Beyond, Eat Right\*](#)

[\*College Nutrition, USDA\*](#)