When a child is first diagnosed with diabetes, parents often wonder, “How many carbohydrates should my child have at each meal?” While every child has different needs based on age, activity, and food preferences, here are some general guidelines to get you started.

Age	Carbs (grams) for Meals	Carbs (grams) for Snacks (if needed)
Boys		
< 5 years old	30-45 g at each meal	15-20 g
5 – 12 years old	45-60 g at each meal	15 -30 g
13 – 18 years old	60-75 g at each meal	15-30 g
Girls		
< 5 years old	30-45 g at each meal	15-20 g
5 – 12 years old	45-60 g at each meal	15-20 g
13 – 18 years old	45-75 g at each meal	15-30 g

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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.

Recommended

How Foods Affect Glucose Levels

Understanding Carbohydrates

Reading Nutritional Labels

Understanding Portion Size

Low Carb Snack Ideas

Sources

Diabetes Care and Education – resources on carbohydrate counting

National Institutes of Health's Estimated Average Requirements for Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs)

Estimated Calorie Needs per Day by Age, Sex, and Physical Activity Level