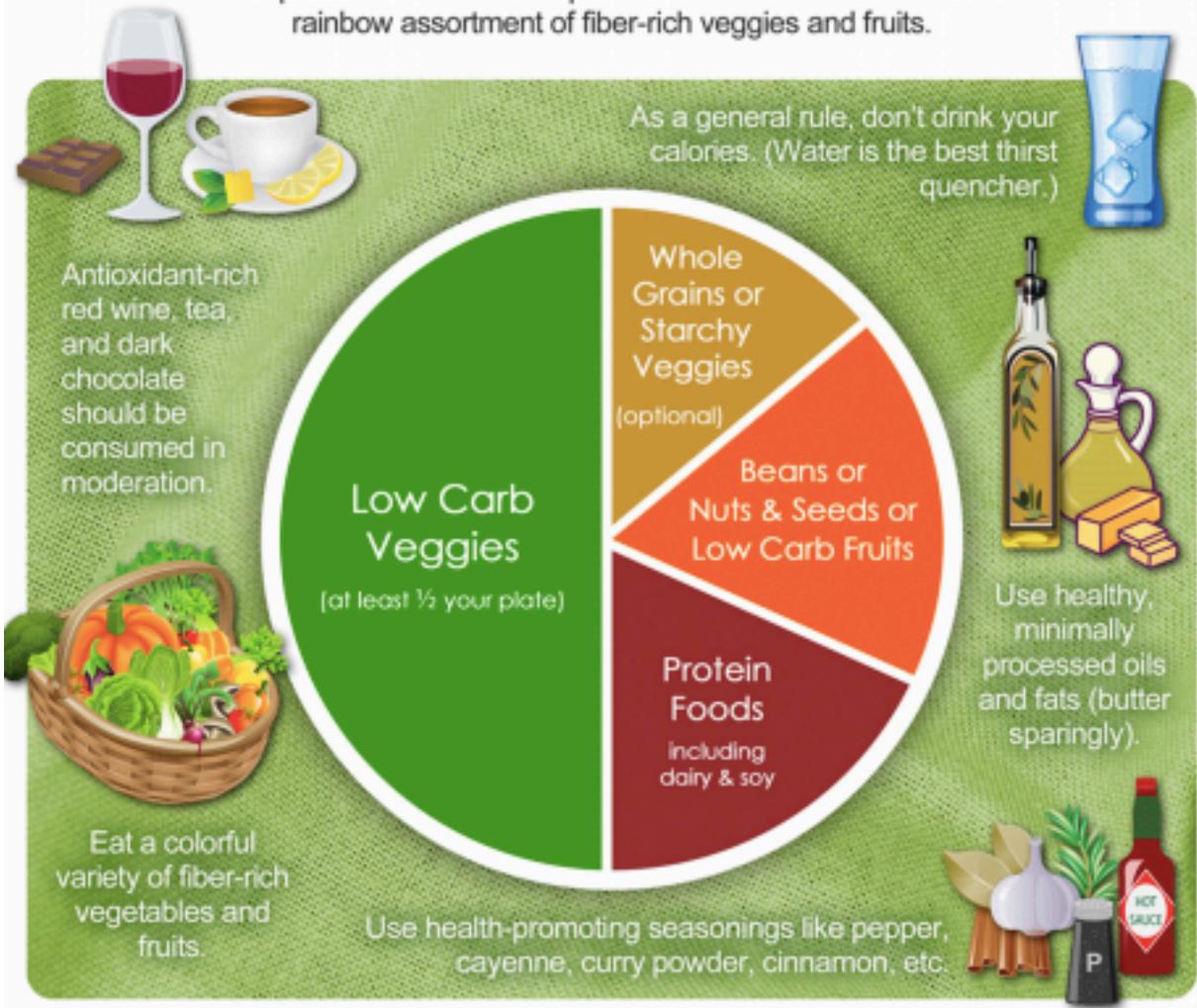


Keep this plate in mind for meal planning and your overall approach to daily eating. Also remember to spread your carbs throughout the day, choose high-fiber carb foods, and always pair them with protein. Keep healthy by eating a good variety of unprocessed animal and plant foods. And think color – eat a rainbow assortment of fiber-rich veggies and fruits.



# Healthy Eating Plate For Diabetes Explained

With the array of colorful plates, food pyramids, and conflicting dietary prescriptions out there, figuring out the best way to eat for your diabetes health is confusing, at best. Since dLife is an independent voice whose

mission includes delivering the best diabetes information and advice, we decided to create our own **Healthy Eating Plate**, designed to help people manage (and prevent) diabetes.

We considered the dietary recommendations of the ADA, the AHA, and the USDA, along with the current body of scientific findings on diet and health. Then we put it all together and looked at it through a diabetes lens. This plate may, in fact, depict the healthiest approach to eating for everyone—as it promotes a back-to-basics, natural-foods dietary pattern. Let’s look at a few of its specific recommendations.

## **1. Eat a Colorful Variety of Low-Carb, Low-Glycemic Veggies.**

Roughly half of what you eat should fall into this category of food. Studies show that green and other deeply-colored vegetables help prevent disease, including many of the complications of diabetes. Research has also shown that low-carb and low-glycemic eating promotes good blood glucose control.

## **2. Try to Have a Single Portion of Natural, Unprocessed Protein Food at Every Meal and Snack.**

Protein foods generally won’t raise blood sugar, and often lessen or slow the impact of any carbs you consume along with them. Processed meats (deli meats, sausage, bacon, spam, etc.) are linked to increased risk of heart disease, cancer, and diabetes. Unprocessed animal proteins, especially full-fat dairy products, may convey important health benefits (e.g., weight control and “good” HDL cholesterol) and should be consumed in moderation.

## **3. Eat a Variety of Beans, Nuts, Seeds, and Low-Glycemic, Low-Carb Fruits in Small to Medium Portions, Depending on Carb Count.**

These categories of plant foods are particularly high in disease-fighting compounds, are also good-to-excellent sources of fiber, and aid in blood glucose control. Though most of these foods are low-glycemic, some are higher in carbs, so balance your portions based upon the net carb count of the

food (total carbs – grams of fiber = net carbs).

#### **4. Eat Small Portions of Whole Grains and Starchy Veggies, Occasionally (Optional).**

Though whole grains and starchy veggies convey some health benefits, they are typically high-glycemic, high-carb, and often pretty low in fiber. Despite what you've heard, whole grains are not necessary for health. Choose the most nutrient-packed varieties, and keep portions small.

#### **5. Use Healthy, Minimally-Processed Oils and Fats.**

Chemical processing and high temperatures destroy the healthy compounds of some oils—and may even create some unhealthy ones. Use cold- or expeller-pressed and extra-virgin oils whenever possible. Despite its stigma, butter is your friend, too, as it contains beneficial fatty acids and is a largely unprocessed fat.

#### **6. Season Your Food with Health-Promoting Herbs and Spices.**

These traditional culinary enhancers come packed with an enormous array of disease-fighting compounds. Expand your repertoire, and use fresh and dried herbs and spices daily.

#### **7. If You Enjoy Red Wine, Black or Green Tea, and Dark Chocolate, Consume These in Moderation.**

Because of the various phytonutrients found in grapes, tea leaves, and cacao beans, these “luxury” food and drink items may contribute to diabetes control and heart health, among other benefits. The key is moderation, as red wine contains alcohol, tea contains caffeine, and chocolate, unless it's 100 percent cacao, contains sugar.

*Note: Individual health issues and medications may dictate dietary restrictions. Talk to your doctor before making any significant change to your diet.*

*This information is not intended to be a replacement or substitute for consultation with a qualified medical professional, or for professional medical advice related to diabetes or another medical condition. Please contact your physician or medical professional with any questions and concerns about your medical condition.*