Share the Wellness Tip
Fit Fact

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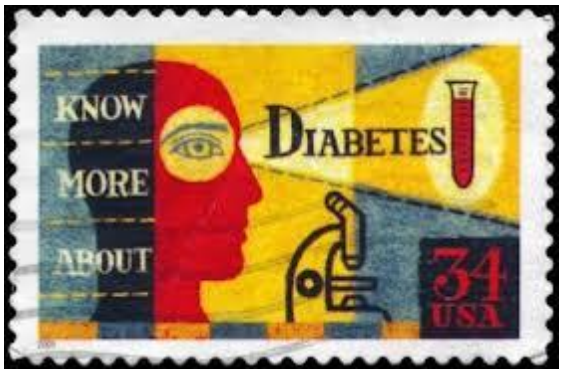
Count Carbs to Control Diabetes

You probably count many things in your daily life. Try tallying just one more – carbohydrates. Many people believe sugar causes diabetes. Research has shown that's simply not true. In fact, eating too much food and being overweight raise the risk for type 2diabetes. Whether you've eaten too much steak or too much cake, it's the overall intake of too many calories that counts. Partly due to this misconception, people with diabetes used to be told to cut sugar from their diets. However, it's the total amount of carbohydrates that you consume, more than the kind of carbohydrate, that affects how high your blood glucose level rise.



Step 1: Set Your Limits

- Carbohydrates are found in a variety of foods, including bread, fruit and cereal. Your body quickly converts them into glucose. By counting carbs you can keep blood glucose spikes in check.
- Work with your diabetes care team to figure out your maximum number of carbs per day. Most adults with diabetes should get no more than 200 grams. But your target depends on your medicines and how much you exercise. Ask your doctor for more information.

Step 2: Track Your Intake

- Each time you eat a meal or snack, note the carbohydrates you consume. Monitor how close you are to your limit.
- Also consider pairing your carbs with protein. When it has protein to break down, the stomach empties more slowly. Adding a little protein to a carb-based meal or snack – like adding some chicken strips, sprinkle of cheese or a dab of a nut butter – can help maintain blood glucose levels.

Sources: American Diabetes Association, January 2011; Eating Well