

Essential Diabetic Cookbook for Beginners

150+ Low-Carb, Healthy & Tasty Recipes
for All Types of Diabetes

Tips to Control Sugar Levels

5-Week Meal Plan for Managing Diabetes
with Shopping Lists

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Introduction

People need pleasure: consciously or subconsciously, they are constantly looking for it. Food is a very significant source of pleasure, and sometimes even the only source of pleasure. It's also the right thing to do! When compared to other sources of pleasure in our life, food comes out on top in terms of the quantity of pleasure it provides. After all, we eat several times every day.

When a person is in a bad mood or stressed, a serving of ice cream or a piece of chocolate can often help. And sometimes raising your mental state with food can even become a habit.

In terms of the structure of our psyche, eating subconsciously means that a person is safe, everything is fine, and they can relax and even take a nap! This mechanism has been built into human nature since ancient times, when food was not as accessible as it is now. Our ancestors often faced a situation where there was nothing to eat for a day, two days, and sometimes a week or several weeks. And in such a situation, one could not relax: the human body mobilized all its strength to go hunting or search for food.

Internal tension arises in a person when they eat little, restrict themselves severely, or do not devote enough time to cooking and eating. The human body switches on the “food acquisition” mode, which is accompanied by anxiety, fears, and overexcitement. If a strict diet or lack of tasty food lasts for a long time, these states are replaced by fatigue and loss of strength, because the body cannot function in the “high alert” mode for a long time.

That is why, when you first hear your diabetes diagnosis, you should not immediately choose a strict diet with no rich flavors, aromas, favorite spices, or interesting and unusual flavor combinations. Your food must be delicious! Yes, it will not be too sweet and overcooked, it will not contain a lot of starch and fast carbohydrates, but this does not mean that it is tasteless. You can find food that is both incredibly tasty for you and safe for diabetes. This book will definitely help you discover a world of new incredible flavors, unusual combinations of ingredients, and interesting recipes for every day!

Vegetable salads with balsamic, yogurt, or peanut dressing, Asian-style dishes with soy sauce, fish or mushroom dishes, grilled meat and vegetables, various sauces, grilled meat and vegetables, hot and healthy soups, safe cheesecake, homemade berry ice cream, jelly, or low-carb pancakes—this is far from a complete list of dishes that can bring you incredible pleasure from eating. So, let's create an atmosphere of healthy, aromatic, and appetizing cuisine that will delight and surprise you every day with its flavors!

Chapter 1. Understanding Diabetes

Diabetes mellitus, commonly referred to as diabetes, is a chronic medical condition characterized by elevated levels of glucose (sugar) in the blood. This condition arises from either a lack of insulin production by the pancreas or the body's inability to effectively use the insulin it produces. Insulin is a vital hormone that regulates blood sugar levels by facilitating the uptake of glucose into cells, where it is used for energy.

Nowadays, diabetes has become a disease in much younger people: more and more often this disease is detected in people ages about 30-35 years. This is primarily due to the food culture and lifestyle of the modern person. People are required to work hard and intensively to achieve success and increase their salary. In this race, people don't have enough time for the most important thing – taking care of their health, which starts with a healthy diet and physical activity. Increasingly, people are replacing breakfast with a cup of strong coffee, grabbing a burger or sandwich on the go instead of a having nutritious and complete lunch, and dinner usually consists of a large amount of fast carbohydrates. Day after day, the human body suffers, receiving a large number of harmful substances, but very little vitamins, minerals, and fiber. As a result, a person does not have enough energy to play sports or at least take daily walks. Modern people spend more and more time in front of computer monitors, use food delivery services more often, and consider lying on the couch with a smartphone in hand to be relaxation. All of these not-so-healthy habits, coupled with constant stress and frequent colds, provoke a faster onset of serious chronic diseases, one of which is diabetes.

Diabetes is an illness that, if not properly managed, can lead to a range of serious health complications. These are often the result of prolonged high blood glucose levels, which can damage various organs and systems. The most common complications of diabetes are cardiovascular disease, neuropathy (nerve damage), nephropathy (kidney damage), retinopathy (eye damage), and an increased risk of infections. Let's examine all types of diabetes in turn and the specific features of each.

Type 1 Diabetes

Type 1 diabetes, often diagnosed in childhood or adolescence, is an autoimmune condition where the immune system attacks and destroys the insulin-producing beta cells in the pancreas. Individuals with type 1 diabetes require lifelong insulin therapy to manage their blood sugar levels.

This type of diabetes is commonly considered childhood diabetes because it is detected at an early age. However, nowadays, type 1 diabetes is being diagnosed at the ages of 20-30.

The precise cause of type 1 diabetes autoimmune reaction is not fully understood, but it involves a combination of genetic, environmental, and possibly viral factors. There is also a theory that an autoimmune reaction occurs as a result of excessive consumption of certain highly allergenic foods, such as cow's milk protein. This theory needs further research and has not been fully proven, but reducing dairy consumption usually has a positive effect on a person's overall health.

Very often, the general recommendation for people with type 1 diabetes is to count the number of carbohydrates in a dish and then inject the required amount of insulin. However, this is not always good advice: eating a large amount of carbohydrates, especially those with a high glycemic index, leads to difficulties in calculating the number of insulin units, as well as to sudden spikes in blood sugar levels.

Type 2 Diabetes

Type 2 diabetes is the most common form and typically develops in adults, although it is increasingly diagnosed in younger individuals due to rising obesity rates. This type is characterized by insulin resistance, where the body's cells do not respond effectively to insulin. Over time, the pancreas cannot produce enough insulin to maintain normal blood glucose levels.

The main reason for type 2 diabetes involves a complex interplay of genetic, lifestyle, and environmental factors.

Genetics play a significant role in the development of type 2 diabetes. Individuals with a family history of diabetes are at a higher risk of developing the condition. Excess body fat, particularly around the abdomen, is a major risk factor for type 2 diabetes. Adipose tissue (fat) can release substances that contribute to insulin resistance, making it harder for the body to use insulin effectively.

Lack of regular physical activity is another significant contributor. Exercise helps to maintain healthy body weight, improves insulin sensitivity, and lowers blood glucose levels. Sedentary lifestyles can lead to weight gain and decreased insulin sensitivity. Diets high in refined sugars, processed foods, and unhealthy fats contribute to obesity and insulin resistance. A diet low in fiber and high in calories can lead to weight gain and impaired glucose metabolism.

Over time, the pancreas may become unable to produce enough insulin to compensate for the body's increased insulin needs due to insulin resistance. This decline in beta cell function further exacerbates hyperglycemia and diabetes progression.

Doctors offer people with type 2 diabetes medications that lower blood sugar levels. These drugs are modern and usually well tolerated by patients. A balanced diet and sufficient physical activity play a very important role in this case, and can significantly reduce the dosage of these medications or even eliminate them altogether.

Prediabetes

Prediabetes is a health condition characterized by higher-than-normal blood sugar levels that are not yet high enough to be classified as type 2 diabetes. This intermediary stage is a critical warning sign and provides an opportunity to take action to prevent the progression to full-blown diabetes. Understanding and addressing prediabetes is essential for reducing the risk of developing type 2 diabetes and its associated complications.

In prediabetes, the body's cells become resistant to the effects of insulin, a hormone produced by the pancreas and that regulates blood sugar. This insulin resistance causes glucose to build up in the bloodstream instead of being used by the cells for energy. Over time, the pancreas struggles to produce enough insulin to overcome this resistance, leading to elevated blood sugar levels.

Prediabetes often has no noticeable symptoms, which is why it is frequently undiagnosed. However, some individuals may experience:

- Increased thirst
- Frequent urination
- Fatigue
- Blurred vision
- Unusual weight loss

These symptoms are more commonly associated with diabetes but can also be early indicators of prediabetes.

Very often, prediabetes is reversible, meaning that if it is detected in a timely manner and with strict adherence to dietary rules, the symptoms of this disease can be significantly reduced or even completely eliminated. Moderate physical activity, lower stress levels, and an adequate hydration regimen will also be very beneficial for people with prediabetes.

Gestational Diabetes

Gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) develops during pregnancy, typically in the second or third trimester. It is characterized by elevated blood glucose levels that were not present before pregnancy. This condition affects how the body's cells use glucose and can pose risks to both the mother and the baby if not properly managed.

During pregnancy, hormonal changes occur to support the developing fetus. These hormonal shifts can cause the body's cells to become more resistant to insulin, the hormone that regulates blood sugar. Normally, the pancreas compensates by producing more insulin. However, in some women, the pancreas cannot keep up with the increased demand, leading to elevated blood glucose levels and resulting in gestational diabetes.

Modern medicine offers a pregnant woman all the necessary tests for the timely detection of this type of diabetes. With proper monitoring and lifestyle modifications, most women can have healthy pregnancies and reduce the risk of complications. Understanding the risk factors, symptoms, and management strategies is crucial for minimizing the impact of gestational diabetes and promoting long-term health.

Developing a Diabetes Nutrition Plan

Regardless of the type of diabetes, the most important concept in the treatment and control of this disease is dietary nutrition. It is a well-known fact that carbohydrates have the greatest impact on blood sugar levels. There are even special approaches to nutrition that completely exclude carbohydrate consumption. These include the ketogenic diet, the Mediterranean diet, the protein-preserving modified diet, and others. Diabetologists are wary of such experiments and do not advise against giving up carbohydrates altogether.

Nutrition experts at the Bavarian Consumer Center named the main reasons to keep carbohydrates in the diet. The scientists noted that carbohydrates are energy suppliers. If the body lacks the glucose contained in carbohydrates, sugar levels drop. This makes a person feel tired and weak. In addition to chronic fatigue, other conditions can develop.

Among other consequences of giving up carbohydrates, the doctors listed:

- **Increased cravings for food.** Unstable blood sugar levels cause cravings for food, which can lead to overeating. That's why many people fall off the low-carb diet after a few days.
- **Bad breath.** If the body lacks carbohydrates, it begins to convert fat reserves into them. Then it goes into a state of ketosis and begins to release chemical compounds (ketones) through the mouth, which is why bad breath occurs.
- **Digestive complaints.** Unlike foods high in fat and protein, foods rich in carbohydrates usually contain a lot of fiber. They are essential for normal digestion. Lack of fiber leads to constipation.
- **Headaches and lack of concentration.** To provide the brain with energy, the body needs glucose. If it is not available, a person often cannot concentrate. In addition, a drop in blood sugar often leads to headaches.

Therefore, you should not completely give up carbohydrates, but it is important to choose the right carbohydrates to consume, and learn how much of them the body needs, and when exactly they are needed.

A person with diabetes can efficiently control their blood sugar levels by following a few basic yet effective guidelines when creating a meal plan: maintain a balance between carbohydrates, protein, and fat. The following guidelines include these points:

1. In order to avoid overeating but also avoid feeling hungry, regulate the weight of each meal.
2. Divide the carbs equally throughout all of your meals. Choose complex carbohydrates that are rich in fiber, such as whole-grain cereals, vegetables, and legumes. Breakfast and lunch are the best times to consume the most carbohydrates. Snacks and dinner should be low in carbs.
3. Ensure that you get enough protein throughout the day. It will maintain your blood sugar levels in the ideal range and give you a prolonged feeling of fullness. In addition, protein is necessary for the synthesis of hormones and enzymes, the maintenance and repair of bodily tissues, and the maintenance of muscle mass.
4. Choose unroasted nuts, avocados, olive, flaxseed, and sesame oils as a source of healthy fats. Try not to eat or limit saturated fats and trans fats contained in margarine, fast food, sauces, ready-made soups, crackers, donuts, fatty meat, fatty dairy products, and coconut and palm oils.
5. Consume food on a daily basis at roughly the same hour. Decide on the simplest and most practical food plan for you and follow it. If you know you won't be able to eat at the appointed hour, don't forget to pack a nutritious and healthy snack.
6. Make sure you stay hydrated throughout the day. Choose unsweetened berry fruit drinks, herbal teas, and simple water. Never overindulge in strong teas or coffee. Take sugar-filled carbonated drinks out of your diet.
7. When eating, take your time, enjoy your food, and get pleasure from this process. Thank yourself for taking care of your lovely body by eating a balanced diet. It will undoubtedly be grateful to you with vitality, vigor, and wellbeing.

The daily allotment for fat, protein, and carbohydrates is determined by a number of variables, including age, weight, gender, level of physical and mental activity, and state of health. Based on average values for an individual with diabetes, a daily diet of 2,000 calories should consist of roughly 150-200 g of carbohydrates, 40-70 g of fats,

and 60-80 g of proteins.

Saturated fat consumption should not exceed 22 grams per day, or less than 10% of total calories. The most common method for calculating protein consumption is weight; that is, one to 1.5 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight. The sample meal plan in the appropriate section in this book will be based on the data above. You can use the sample meal plan as a basic guide, but adjust it by your needs and speak with a nutritionist or doctor to learn more specific guidelines.

Note! Individual characteristics of the body must also be taken into account. General recommendations are not the only criterion for choosing carbohydrates for a particular person, because the same food containing carbohydrates can cause a spike in blood sugar in one person, while in another it does not. For example, dates, which are considered to be a food with a high glycemic index, do not cause a rise in sugar levels in some people (of course, provided they are consumed in moderation). Therefore, each case of diabetes is unique and requires careful study.

For this purpose, we use glucometers and daily glycemic monitoring systems, as well as food diaries. A thorough study of your body and how it consumes and absorbs certain foods is necessary during the first 2-3 months after diagnosis, as well as when consuming new foods.

In your food diary, you should write down what foods or dishes you eat for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, as well as their quantity and time of consumption. Along with this information, you should also record your blood sugar level two hours after the meal. It is also useful to measure your glycemic levels in the morning on an empty stomach and before going to bed. With such a thorough description of your diet, it will be easier for you to identify those foods that should be completely excluded from your diet, and those that can be consumed almost without restriction. It will be useful to take such a diary to a visit with a diabetologist to adjust your drug therapy based on this information.

Choosing Healthy Foods

Proteins, fats, and carbohydrates are macronutrients that form the basis of a healthy diet. To achieve maximum benefits for the body, you need to adhere to their optimal proportion in foods throughout the day.

Usually, a balanced diet is considered to be one that contains:

- **Carbohydrates:** 45-65% of the total daily calories.
- **Proteins:** 10-35% of the total daily calories.
- **Fats:** 20-35% of the total daily calories.

In addition to these substances, it is important to get sufficient vitamins, minerals, and other essential nutrients necessary for bodily functions.

For people with any type of diabetes, foods with a low glycemic index are preferred.

The glycemic index (GI) is a measure used to classify carbohydrates in food based on their effect on blood glucose levels after consumption. It reflects how quickly and to what level blood sugar rises after eating a particular food compared to a reference food, usually glucose or white bread, which is assigned a GI of 100.

Foods with a high GI are digested quickly and increase blood sugar levels, while foods with a low GI are digested more slowly and cause a more gradual increase in glucose levels. The following range of GI values is distinguished:

- **Low GI:** 55 or less. These foods slowly increase blood glucose levels.
- **Medium GI:** 56 to 69.
- **High GI:** 70 or more. These foods increase blood glucose levels quickly.

Table 1 below shows the healthiest foods for people with diabetes. All of following foods have a low GI, help to avoid sudden spikes in blood sugar, provide the body with essential vitamins and minerals, are low in calories, rich in fiber, and promote a feeling of fullness.

Table 1: "Green light" foods with low GI.

Food (100g serving)	GI	Protein (g)	Fat (g)	Carbohydrates (g)
Leafy Greens				
Spinach	15	2.9	0.4	3.6
Kale	15	2.9	0.6	6.7

Food (100g serving)	GI	Protein (g)	Fat (g)	Carbohydrates (g)
Romaine lettuce	15	1.2	0.3	3.3
Whole Grains				
Quinoa (boiled)	53	4.4	1.2	21.3
Brown rice (boiled)	50	2.6	0.9	23.5
Steel-cut oats (boiled)	54	5.9	3.6	28.0
Buckwheat (boiled)	45	4.3	1.2	21.3
Corn (boiled)	52	3.2	1.2	18.0
Nuts & Seeds				
Chia seeds	15	4.7	8.6	12.0
Almonds (raw)	15	6.0	14.0	6.0
Walnuts (raw)	15	4.3	18.5	3.9
Cashew (raw)	25	18.0	44.0	30.0
Flax seeds	35	1.9	4.3	2.0
Legumes				
Lentils (cooked)	32	9.0	0.4	20.0
Black beans (cooked)	30	8.9	0.5	23.7
Chickpeas (cooked)	28	8.9	2.6	27.4
Peas (fresh, green)	35	5.4	0.2	16
Fruits & Berries				
Blueberries	51	0.7	0.3	14.5
Strawberries	40	0.7	0.3	7.7
Raspberries	26	0.7	1.2	12.0
Apples	39	0.5	0.2	25.1
Pears	38	0.4	0.1	27.5
Oranges	48	1.2	0.1	14.8
Apricots	34	1.4	0.5	11.1
Plums	40	0.7	0.3	11.0
Vegetables				
Zucchini	15	1.1	0.4	2.7
Cabbage	10	1.3	0.1	5.5
Cauliflower	15	1.9	0.3	5.0
Broccoli	10	2.6	0.3	7.2
Bell peppers	15	1.0	0.2	6.6
Brussels sprouts	15	2.6	0.5	7.1
Artichokes	32	2.9	0.3	12.0
Carrots	47	0.9	0.2	10
Tomato	20	0.9	0.2	3.9
Cucumber	15	0.7	0.1	3.6
Meat, Fish & Seafood				
Chicken breast (cooked)	0	31.0	3.6	0.0
Turkey breast (cooked)	0	24.0	2.0	0.0
Lean beef, sirloin (cooked)	0	29.8	6.6	0.0
Tuna (cooked)	0	29.9	6.2	0.0
Sardines (cooked)	0	25.0	11.0	0.0
Salmon (cooked)	0	22.0	12.0	0.0
Mackerel (cooked)	0	22.5	13.8	0.0
Squid (cooked)	0	18.0	1.6	3.5
Shrimp (cooked)	0	23.0	1.7	1.5
Low-Fat Dairy Products				
Greek yogurt	12	5.1	3.4	6.4
Low-fat cottage cheese	30	14.0	1.2	3.1
Skim milk	27	8.3	0.2	12.0
Feta cheese	30	4.0	6.0	1.2

Food (100g serving)	GI	Protein (g)	Fat (g)	Carbohydrates (g)
Parmesan cheese	27	10.0	7.0	1.0
Healthy Fats				
Olive oil	0	0.0	14.0	0.0
Coconut oil	0	0.0	14.0	0.0
Natural peanut butter	40	8.0	16.0	7.7
Other Diabetes-Friendly Foods				
Avocado	10	4.0	29.0	17.0
Eggs	0	12.6	9.5	0.7
Hummus	6-9	7.9	8.6	13.8
Mushrooms	36	2.2	0.5	5.3
Goat cheese	0	5.3	6.0	0.1

You may have previously thought that the list of healthy and useful foods for a person with diabetes was rather modest, but this is not the case. As you can see from the table, this list is quite large and varied. These foods have a “green” light when included in the daily meal plan of a diabetic diet. They should be the basis for a complete diet for people with diabetes. These products may be used in salads, soups, main courses, snack and desserts.

Note: In the table above there are foods which have carbohydrates 6 g. and below, indicating products you may consume almost without any limitation as well as use as safe snacks. Good snacks are vegetables, low GI fruits, and cheese. Most nuts have a low glycemic index, which means that they do not cause sudden spikes in blood sugar. That makes nuts a good snack too, but be careful with the portion: it is recommended to consume no more than 1 ounce per day.

Now we will consider foods with a medium GI. They do not need to be completely excluded from the diet, but it is recommended to consume them in limited quantities together with foods with a low GI.

Table 2: “Yellow light” foods with medium GI

Food (100g serving)	GI	Protein (g)	Fat (g)	Carbohydrates (g)
Vegetables				
Beets (boiled)	64	1.6	0.2	13.0
Sweet potatoes (steamed or boiled)	54-69	1.6	0.1	20.0
White potato (boiled, with skin)	56-67	2.5	0.1	22.0
Whole Grains				
Couscous (boiled)	62	3.8	0.2	23.2
Basmati rice (boiled)	58	2.7	0.5	27.1
Pasta (al dente, boiled)	56	5.8	1.1	31.0
Rolled oats (boiled)	56	2.4	1.4	12.3
Whole grain bread	55-59	4.0	1.1	20.0
Fruits				
Pineapple	64	0.5	0.1	13.0
Cherries	63	1.0	0.2	16.0
Figs	61	0.8	0.3	18.9
Papaya	60	0.5	0.3	11.0
Melon	65	1.5	0.3	14.0
Banana (ripe)	50-60	1.1	0.3	23.0
Dates (dried)	56	5.2	0.4	75.0
Raisin	66	3.0	0.5	78.2
Mango	56	0.8	0.4	15

The foods listed above in Table 2 can be called “yellow light” foods. They do not lead to high sugar levels if consumed carefully, in limited amounts, and in combination with safe foods. For example, if you choose a low-carb salad for lunch, you can afford to eat a slice of whole-grain bread or a sweet fruit for dessert.

Despite the fact that most fruits taste quite sweet, they can be included in a diabetic diet. Fruits contain fructose and a lot of fiber, which slows the absorption of glucose from food, so it releases sugar slowly in the blood, thus

keeping the sugar level in check. Dietary fiber also curbs food cravings and supports weight loss. Fruits are also a source of vitamins, minerals, anthocyanins, and antioxidants. However, fruit should not be overeaten. It is better to choose unsweetened varieties and fruits that are not overripe. Particular attention should be paid to dried fruits. As a rule, they belong to foods with an average GI, but due to the lack of liquid in them, the amount of carbohydrates in them is quite high. Therefore, it is recommended to eat them with main dishes rich in low-carbohydrate foods.

Tip: The glycemic index of some foods is also affected by the way they are cooked. For example, potatoes have from low to medium GI if they have been boiled or steamed. The baking or roasting process destroys resistant starch, giving roasted or baked potatoes a much higher glycemic index. The same rule is true for sweet potato.

Eating boiled potatoes with peel reduces GI because the peel adds fiber to the final dish and makes the breakdown of carbohydrates more difficult, and as a result, blood sugar levels rise gradually.

Now let's move on to Table 3, listing the “red-light” products with a high GI. Their consumption is completely undesirable or they should only be eaten in very small quantities and very rarely.

Table 3: “Red light” foods with high GI

Food (100g serving)	GI	Protein (g)	Fat (g)	Carbohydrates (g)
Vegetables				
Potatoes (mashed)	78	2.0	4.2	17.0
French fries	75	3.4	15.0	41.0
Potatoes (skinless, baked)	95	2.3	4.0	20.0
Grains				
White bread	70-75	8.9	3.3	49.0
White rice (boiled)	72	2.7	0.3	28.0
Cornflakes	81	7.5	0.4	84.0
Rice cakes	77	8.2	2.8	82.0
Instant oatmeal	79	2.4	1.4	12.0
Popcorn (microwaved)	72	3.6	2.7	20.0
Instant noodles	73	1.8	2.5	9.3
Pretzels	83	10.1	3.0	82.0
Crackers	80	6.8	27.5	62.5
Fruits				
Watermelon	72	1.7	0.4	22.0
Pineapple (canned)	65	0.9	0.2	20.0
Other non-friendly products				
Doughnuts	76	3.7	14.0	29.0
Soft drinks (sugary)	63-69	0	0	10.8
Candy bars	72-80	7.7	25.2	62.5
Jelly bears	74	0	0	99
Sugar	70	0	0	100

Therefore, it is very important to monitor your glycemic control on a regular basis, especially during the first few months after being diagnosed with diabetes. You need to identify your dangerous foods and possibly adjust the tables above. But there is one more case where it is truly necessary to have high-GI products. It's hypoglycemia (low blood sugar).

Low Blood Sugar Level

People with diabetes can sometimes experience a potentially dangerous condition called hypoglycemia. In this case, the blood sugar level falls below the minimum permissible level, which can have extremely serious consequences for the human body. The human brain constantly needs glucose for its normal functioning and for the regulation of all organs and systems of the body. Therefore, if the glucose level drops below 70 mg/dL (or 3.9 mmol/L), a person immediately experiences the following symptoms:

- Tremors
- Sweating
- Heart palpitations
- Feeling of hunger
- Dizziness or weakness
- Confusion or irritability
- Headache
- Blurred vision
- Seizures (in severe cases)

These symptoms must never be ignored, as this condition will only worsen. In this case, it is appropriate to measure the sugar level with a glucometer, and if the suspicion of hypoglycemia is confirmed, the following steps should be taken:

1. Consume 15-20 grams of fast-acting carbohydrates (glucose tablets or gel, 1 glass of fruit juice or soft drink with sugar, a tablespoon of honey or sugar, caramel candy). Keep in mind that sweeteners are useless in this situation because they just have a sweet taste and not enough carbs for increasing blood sugar levels;
2. Check your glucose level 15 minutes after eating carbohydrates. If the level is still low, repeat the intake of fast carbohydrates;
3. After glucose levels have stabilized, eat a meal or snack containing slow-acting carbohydrates and protein to prevent a second drop in sugar levels.

Remember: If you are unable to measure your current blood sugar level but have those symptoms, it is better to follow the steps above. Hypoglycemia is much more dangerous than hyperglycemia. However, you should measure your glycemic level as soon as possible.

Why might hypoglycemia occur? There can be various reasons, including:

- **Medicines for the treatment of diabetes.** Using excessive doses of insulin can cause a decrease in blood glucose levels. Some oral hypoglycemic drugs, such as sulfonylureas, can also cause hypoglycemia.
- **Improper nutrition.** Missing or delayed meals after insulin injection or taking hypoglycemic medications.
- **Low-calorie diet.** Consuming too few calories or carbohydrates can lead to a decrease in glucose levels.
- **Intense physical activity.** Excessive or unusual physical activity can lead to the use of more glucose by the muscles, which lowers blood glucose levels.
- **Alcohol.** Drinking alcohol without food can cause glucose levels to drop because the liver is busy processing alcohol and does not produce enough glucose.
- **Medical conditions.** Certain liver, kidney, or hormonal disorders can affect blood glucose levels.

Tip: If you are planning a trip or a long walk, remember to take a glucometer, water, and quick-digesting foods like honey, candies, or glucose tablets. When experiencing hypoglycemia, it's a good idea to carry a bottle of sweet juice or another beverage that has been sweetened with sugar (about 1 cup).

Additionally, it is crucial to act quickly to raise glucose levels, because hypoglycemia can result in unconsciousness in more severe circumstances, and you will then require emergency medical care.

High Blood Sugar Level

Normal glycemic levels are usually considered to be:

- **Fasting:** 70-99 mg/dL (3.9-5.5 mmol/L);
- **1-2 hours after a meal:** less than 140 mg/dL (7.8 mmol/L);
- **Before going to bed:** 100-140 mg/dL (5.6-7.8 mmol/L).

However, if blood sugar levels marginally surpass these standards but the glycemic index stays below 180 mg/dL (10 mmol/L), this suggests a disruption in the metabolism of carbohydrates or a non-adherence to a prescribed diet. However, the body is safe at this level of glucose. This does not imply that a rise in blood sugar can be disregarded; rather, you should examine any errors in your daily routine or diet and make an effort to avoid making the same

ones again. In this instance, going for a lengthy walk, engaging in mild exercise, or dancing can help drop your blood sugar levels. A warm shower or stair climbing may be helpful for certain folks.

The condition becomes more dangerous if the blood sugar level exceeds 180 mg/dL (10 mmol/L), as it can negatively impact internal organs, vision, the nervous system, the cardiovascular system, and other systems. You can also use the above-described strategies to bring your glucose levels back to normal. However, in order to get your blood sugar level back to normal, you should definitely consult a doctor if it stays high or rises above 288 mg/dL (16 mmol/L).

If Insulin Has Been Prescribed for You

Insulin therapy—using subcutaneous insulin injections—is recommended for people with type 1 diabetes and, in certain situations, type 2 diabetes. In order to maintain energy balance, insulin works as a conductor of glucose from the blood to the body's cells.

When you first learn about these injections, you may initially be anxious and have many questions. "I need to administer injections to myself and by myself? How frequently? Is it painful? What if I make a mistake? What distinguishes short-acting insulin from long-acting insulin? Is it for the rest of my life?"

First of all, I want to reassure you that using insulin nowadays is quite simple and almost painless. It's typical for people to experience the first two or three weeks as confusing and scary. After that, you will learn all the tricks and become familiar with this process. Additionally, you may significantly cut down on the frequency of insulin shots if you follow a low-carb diet and keep to the guidelines and recipes in my book.

Secondly, I'll explain in detail the difference between long-acting and short-acting insulin.

Long-acting insulin is usually injected in the evening before bedtime, usually in the thigh. It keeps the body's insulin levels steady and breaks down the glucose the body makes while you sleep or throughout the day, but is not related to food intake.

When using long-acting insulin, it is important to eat on time, avoiding long breaks between meals to prevent hypoglycemia. After all, long-acting insulin is constantly present in the body, and with long breaks, it begins to break down the glucose that is present in the body. If your blood sugar is sufficiently low and you don't eat, long-acting insulin will keep lowering your blood sugar levels. I suggest that you always have a nut bar or a few whole grain cookies on hand. If you miss a meal, these foods will help keep your blood sugar levels in check so you can wait painlessly for a satisfying dinner.

Short-acting insulin is injected 15-20 minutes before meals and works for only 3-4 hours. This type of insulin is most often injected into the abdominal area. It helps to absorb the glucose that enters the body with food. The amount of insulin injected depends on how many carbohydrate units (CU) you are going to eat right now. You can find more information about CU in the next chapter.

For example, you are going to eat half a slice of rye bread, 110 grams of boiled buckwheat with mushroom sauce, a slice of ham, a vegetable salad, and 1 cup of Greek yogurt. In this case, we take into account ONLY the carbohydrate foods on your plate, i.e., half a slice of rye bread (= 1 CU), 110 grams of boiled buckwheat (= 2.5 CU), and 1 glass of Greek yogurt (= 1.5 CU). In total, $1+2.5+1.5 = 5$ units, which corresponds to approximately 5-7 units of short-acting insulin (depending on individual characteristics of the body, time of day of injection, and physical activity). After injecting short-acting insulin and eating a meal, measure your glucose level two hours after the meal. You can use the measurement result to determine whether you have accurately estimated the amount of insulin units injected and the CU you had.

- If the glucose level remains within 9.5 mmol/L, the insulin dose was calculated correctly.
- In the event that the glucose level is below 6.5 mmol/L, more short-acting insulin was given than was necessary for the CU to be absorbed.
- If the glucose level is higher than 9.5 mmol/L, it means that the short-acting insulin injected was not enough for the carbohydrates consumed.

Therefore, short-acting insulin is not necessary if your breakfast or lunch comprises foods that contain little to no carbohydrates, such as avocado, cheese, cucumber, almonds, stewed meat, and so on.

Thirdly, let's explore some specifics about how insulin is ingested.

- When administering the injection, always use a disposable syringe or needle (if using a pen). This is necessary

to guarantee that the injection is painless and to stop pathogens from entering the body.

- Keep changing the injection site to avoid the formation of lipodystrophy (skin lesions or pits), which impairs insulin absorption.
- Disinfect the injection site with an antiseptic swab, but be sure to wait until the disinfectant evaporates from the skin! Insulin is a very delicate substance that can be partially destroyed when mixed with an antiseptic.
- Make sure that there is no air in the syringe needle or syringe pen. Gently press the plunger of the syringe (or select 2 units of insulin on the syringe pen and press the button) and look at the end of the needle. If you see droplets of clear liquid, you can start injecting.
- If you feel a lot of pain when inserting the needle, it is better to change the injection site, as there is a possibility that you have entered a blood vessel. This in itself is not a major concern: insulin will get into the body anyway, but a bruise or swelling may appear at the injection site.
- When injecting, use your thumb and forefinger to make a small crease in the skin to ensure that the insulin reaches the area of the body where it is supposed to go, between the skin and muscle. Press the plunger slowly, counting to ten, to make the injection smooth. Do not remove the needle immediately after injection, but wait another five seconds.
- Do not rub or massage the injection site AFTER the procedure. This can lead to accelerated absorption of insulin and subsequent hypoglycemia.

You may now find all of these precautions confusing. However, this is just an initial overview! You will be able to comprehend the complexities of administering insulin more easily after the first week, after another week you will be able to do everything with ease, and after still another week you will be able to instruct others! Experience is the key to everything!

Ask a nurse to watch you at first and demonstrate the proper injection technique if you are still confused and find it challenging.

Modern Technologies and Diabetes

Even 100 years ago, living with diabetes was extremely tough. Regardless of whether a person recognized their diagnosis, treatment methods were imperfect, and medications were expensive and difficult to obtain for the average person. One of the most popular techniques for treating diabetes at the time was a low-carbohydrate diet, or even famine, which resulted in fatigue, weakness, and the inability to live a normal life.

Even the discovery of insulin in the 1920s did not make life any easier for diabetics: the inability to manage blood sugar levels meant that patients could not accurately calculate insulin dosages and frequently experienced hypoglycemia.

Glucose meters, which were introduced in the 1980s, have shown to be quite useful for diabetics. It was no longer necessary to visit a laboratory and wait in line to get blood sugar levels measured. Measuring glycemia at home now takes only a few minutes. A person could alter the insulin dosage and select the best diet for themselves.

Modern **insulin** is made using recombinant DNA technology and is equivalent to human insulin, lowering the likelihood of adverse responses. These current procedures allow for the large-scale production of insulin, meeting the needs of patients all around the world while remaining relatively inexpensive. In 1985, insulin syringes were introduced, making insulin administration easier, safer, and more accurate. Most current insulin syringes have tiny needles, are lightweight and small, and can be used to finetune the dosage precision to one unit or less (0.5 units). Patients can choose the optimal treatment regimen for themselves because of the several types of insulin available.

In addition to glucometers, modern **CGM (continuous glucose monitoring)** systems can be utilized to track blood glucose levels. These are little gadgets worn on the arm that use Bluetooth to send the current sugar level to a particular app on a smartphone or laptop. These programs are straightforward and easy to use; they may maintain a history of continuous measurements for several months, display graphs of glycemic variations, generate numerous reports, and collect statistics. As the measurement equipment is nearly invisible to the naked eye, you can go about your daily routine while wearing it, including swimming in the pool, taking a shower, and sleeping. These gadgets do not require calibration and are very reliable blood sugar management tools.

The warning feature of many contemporary CGM devices alerts the patient to potentially harmful changes in blood sugar, such as hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia.

An **insulin pump** is one additional cutting-edge and extremely practical equipment in the life of a diabetic. This medical device ensures continuous blood sugar management by automatically delivering insulin to the patient's body. Patients with type 1 diabetes are the main users of it, but some type 2 diabetics may find it helpful as well. An insulin reservoir, an under-the-skin catheter, and a programmable microcontroller that regulates insulin delivery are the standard components of insulin pumps. With the use of pumps, you can precisely adjust your insulin dosage, preventing blood sugar increases. Insulin pump users must swap out their catheters every two to three days rather than administering numerous shots of insulin throughout the day.

Certain insulin pump models have the ability to interface with continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) devices, enabling you to automatically change your insulin dosage and receive real-time blood sugar data.

A significant disadvantage of insulin pumps can be the discomfort that some users experience when wearing them on their bodies and performing daily activities. The risk of infection at the injection site may rise if a catheter is continuously inserted beneath the skin. To operate insulin pumps correctly, some knowledge and abilities are also needed. Patients need to be taught how to maintain, program, and change dosages for the device. Insulin pumps can come with costly consumables (batteries, reservoirs, and catheters). Some insurance companies do not pay for these expenses.

However, despite all of these limitations, an increasing number of patients are selecting insulin pumps, which imitate the functions of the pancreas when set up correctly and paired with CGM devices. Maybe in the future, insulin pumps' drawbacks will be lessened, their price will drop, and they'll end up being the greatest aids for diabetics.

Along with continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) systems, **smart glucometers**, and **smart syringe pens** are now available that connect to a smartphone via Bluetooth to evaluate glucose data and administer insulin more precisely. For smartphones, plenty of apps have been created to assist users in creating menus that suit their tastes, physical activity levels, and way of life. Additionally, researchers are developing alternate techniques for delivering insulin; for instance, devices exist for inhaling insulin.

With the help of these modern innovations, persons with diabetes can better manage their blood glucose levels, lower their risk of complications, and enhance their quality of life.

Your surroundings are important

The rule is straightforward: we are shaped by our surroundings. It may not have occurred to you, yet it is unquestionably true! Numerous senses provide a wealth of information to our consciousness, which subtly shapes our judgments, conclusions, beliefs, and views. So, it continues, day after day, week after week, and so forth. The people we interact with, the places we visit, the events we witness—all of this is our experience and the foundation on which our behavioral mode is based.

There is plenty of evidence and real-life stories to prove this. Let's consider a simple example. A young athlete and advocate of a healthy lifestyle suddenly has to move to a small town where people spend most of their free time on the couch with chips in front of the TV. Or they sit in bars engaging in idle chatter and drinking beverages that are not the healthiest. The sports fields in this town are dusty and weedy. Every day, the young man will hear from people how soft and comfortable their couches are, what new flavors of chips have appeared on the market, and that a new comedy series has started on TV. The young man will see these people sitting in cafes all evening, chatting, consuming unhealthy food and drinks with very low (almost zero) nutritional value. And sooner or later, the young man will join them, give up training, and forget what protein breakfasts are, how to make detox smoothies, and what a healthy plate of food looks like!

Conversely, if a young man who is not at all athletic moves to a small town where everyone around him is involved in sports, he will eventually start running or cycling long distances too. This is because he will be surrounded by sports grounds and sportswear shops. People of all ages in bright clothes, smiling and rosy-cheeked, will run or cycle past him. Cafes will offer him healthy meals. The young man will witness sporting events where this emotional spirit of strength, agility, and endurance will definitely embrace him sooner or later. He will inevitably “catch up” to the level of his surroundings.

There are, of course, exceptions: people with iron willpower who pursue their goals no matter what, and no amount of persuasion or events can steer them in a different direction. But we most often see such people only in

movies. In most cases, people are still susceptible to the influence of their environment.

So, in order to give up unhealthy eating habits and move to a new level of conscious nutrition, your environment will be of great help to you. Take a closer look at it, review it, and notice if you are surrounded by people who do not cook for themselves and consider it a waste of time. Or people for whom a holiday means eating until they can't get up from the table. Or people who believe that a diagnosis of diabetes means the end of a happy life and no more joy. Don't give in to such attitudes! Find yourself a circle of people who live happily despite difficult circumstances, who understand the importance of proper nutrition and take it seriously, and who look for a way out of any situation even one that may at first appear hopeless.

They will become motivators and examples of people who take responsibility for all aspects of life into their own hands. You will “catch up” to their level. And in the near future, it is very likely that your family and friends will “catch up” to you.

Even tastier

Food should be prepared with love from high-quality and healthy ingredients. The dish should be to your liking, and you should definitely enjoy it. This is an indisputable fact, and it is impossible to disagree with it. However, let's talk about the process of eating itself. How often do you watch or listen to the news while eating breakfast, or talk on the phone during lunch? In such cases, food takes a back seat. Another very common practice is business dinners. People in elegant suits eat and discuss strategically important business issues in a restaurant. Do they pay attention to the taste of the food on their plates? I doubt it ...

We should be mindful of our food. It's worthwhile. Here are some straightforward yet crucial pointers on how to accomplish that.

- Before you eat, be sure to say a prayer or just give thanks for what's on your plate. Even if it seems like there is nothing to be thankful for, do it anyway. Thank the Universe, Life, the Creator, God, and all the people who grew, harvested, stored, transported, and sold this food to you. Think about how much work has been put into it! There are so many people in the world who dream of the food you have on your table right now.
- Control your portion size. Put everything you are going to eat on your plate at once. This way, you can estimate how many calories, protein, fat, and carbohydrates you'll be consuming and plan your next meal for today or tomorrow.
- Enjoy the look of your food and decorate your eating space. It is very important to make food not only tasty but also beautiful. Use beautiful dishes for dinner, buy a saucepan and an original spice set, sprinkle the dish with herbs or ground nuts, light a scented candle, spread a bright tablecloth, decorate the chair with an interesting cover or pillow— everything matters to you! Believe me, in such an atmosphere, your dinner will bring you incredible pleasure!
- Don't watch TV and don't use gadgets while eating. Don't eat on the go. Your attention is scattered and not focused on the food and flavors, but rather on the background. Thus, you do not experience the taste of food 100%, and the brain cannot get the maximum flavor from the food. This can lead to overeating or a lack of joy after a meal.
- Share your dinner with a nice person or family. Eating together brings people very close and brings more pleasure from the meal. Try not to talk too much during the process, and focus on the flavors and aromas of your meal as much as possible.
- Don't snack—work up an appetite! Try to plan your day so that you feel slightly hungry by the time you eat. Then the flavors will really stand out for you!
- Be sure to set aside time for meals. Let it be a time just for you, free from news, problems, heavy thoughts, and empty conversations—filled with gratitude, pleasant experiences, and real pleasure from eating healthy food. Eat small bites and chew your food thoroughly, and not only will your taste buds be satisfied, but your digestive system will be incredibly grateful for it!

Food is like the bricks that build your body. Food is an integral part of our daily lives, and not only what we eat is very important, but also how we eat it. I sincerely wish that you have at least one meal a day in compliance with all these recommendations. This is important not only for the health of your body and maintaining normal blood glucose levels, but also for your mental health and good mood!

Mental Care

Many persons with diabetes initially find it extremely difficult to accept their diagnosis. This is particularly true in our social environment, where foods that are off-limits to us are really popular, such as chips, French fries, cheesecakes, sweet yogurts, and a long list of other products.

However, try not to get upset! Remember that every time you deprive yourself of this unhealthy meal, this food is bad for everyone, not just those who have diabetes. Additionally, look for a good and healthful substitute for yourself, such as healthy bars with nuts and without sugar, chocolate with sweetener, not overly-sweet fruits, tasty cheese, your favorite nuts, dried fruits, or lozenges. Prepare low-carb treats for yourself and sip flavored refreshments. Select a few eateries and cafés where you can eat delectable and healthful food. Remind yourself from time to time that you've recently adopted a new lifestyle that involves taking care of your body! Are French fries and chips more appealing than a fit, attractive, and active body?

In addition to eating, make an effort to discover how to appreciate life through other pursuits including sports, hobbies, walks, get-togethers with loved ones, interactions with animals, and lending a hand to others. Furthermore, you ought to be mindful of your thoughts in addition to what you consume. Mental and emotional states greatly influence blood glucose levels as well as overall health. The body reflexively raises blood glucose while stressed, fearful, angry, aggressive, or experiencing other negative emotions, because it perceives you as being in danger. On the other hand, the body can process and assimilate meals more easily when it is at rest.

However, life can be surprising at times, and certain emotions might be difficult to control because they develop at the level of reflexes; it is impossible to be happy, calm, and positive all the time. Therefore, everyone should be able to return to a condition of peace in their own way. There are simple and effective practices that help people influence their state of mind, calm down, and cope with negative emotions. Here are a few common breathing and physical techniques that I use myself when necessary.

Practice breathing "4-7-8".

1. Maintain a comfortable posture, straighten your back, and relax your muscles while you sit or lie down.
2. Close your eyes and let out all of your breath via your mouth, emitting a soft "hhhhh" sound.
3. When you count to four, shut your mouth and take a breath via your nose.
4. For the count of seven, hold your breath.
5. Make the sound "hhhhh" as you slowly release the breath through your mouth to the count of eight.
6. Repeat the cycle 4-7 times.

The "square breathing" breathing practice.

1. Close your eyes, sit comfortably, straighten your back, and relax your muscles.
2. Inhale through your nose for four counts.
3. For four counts, hold your breath.
4. Breathe out slowly through your mouth for four counts.
5. For four counts, hold your breath.
6. Until you feel at ease, repeat this cycle 5-10 times, or more.

Practice breathing "5-10".

1. Sit or lie in a comfortable position, straighten your back.
2. Relax your muscles, close your eyes and exhale completely through your mouth.
3. For 5 counts, close your lips and breathe in through your nostrils.
4. As you slowly exhale through your mouth, count to 10. The exhale should last twice as long as the inhale throughout this workout.
5. To feel relief, repeat the cycle 7-10 times, or as many as necessary.

Breathing exercise "left-right".

1. Sit in the lotus position or lie in a comfortable position, straighten your back.
2. Relax your muscles and close your eyes and exhale completely through your mouth.

3. Close your mouth. Using the right index finger, close the right nostril. Take a five-count breath in via your left nostril.
4. Now use the left index finger to shut the left nostril. Breathe out slowly using your right nostril. In addition, count to five while you inhale via the right nostril.
5. Now change the side: close the right nostril, exhale slowly, and then inhale through the left nostril. Exhalation should be slower than inhalation.
6. Repeat the cycle 5-7 times, alternating sides, or as many times as you need to feel relief.

Physical practice “Balance”

1. Sit in a comfortable position, relax your muscles as much as possible, and close your eyes if you can. Place your hands on your thighs.
2. Breathe freely, but try to make your exhalations longer than usual.
3. As you exhale, clench one hand into a fist, and as you inhale, relax your hand as much as possible. Alternate between your right and left hands.
4. It should look like this: exhale—clench your right hand into a fist, inhale—relax your right hand, exhale—clench your left hand into a fist, inhale—relax your left hand. Repeat this cycle 30-40 times for each hand, but you can do more for a better effect.
5. During this exercise, there is a balance between the parts of the nervous system responsible for excitation and relaxation, respectively. The mechanism of this exercise is based on the fact that the hands are connected by nerve endings to the hemispheres of the brain. By clenching and relaxing the hands, the body receives a signal about the need to balance these two states.

Physical practice “Healing self-massage”

1. Sit in a comfortable position, relax your muscles as much as possible, and take your right palm in your left hand.
2. Gradually walk the fingers of your left hand across the entire palm of your right hand, making light massage movements. Then move to the back of the palm and continue the massage. Gently massage each finger and nail of your right hand.
3. Switch sides—massage your left hand with your right hand.
4. If during the exercise you feel discomfort (“pain points”) on the palm or fingers, you can linger on these points and press a little harder on them, preferably massaging them.
5. The mechanism of this exercise is based on the fact that the hands are closely connected not only to the hemispheres of the brain, but also to various organs and systems of the body. This simple self-massage helps to identify “pressure points” and release them.

Physical practice “Radiant Face”

1. Sit in a comfortable position and relax as much as possible. Using gentle and careful movements, you will perform a self-massage of the face. Your hands should be warm.
2. Start with the forehead area: massage your forehead from your eyebrows to your hairline with light movements, as if smoothing it out and removing all wrinkles.
3. Move on to the eyebrows: gently squeeze your eyebrows between your fingers, as if trying to grab and pull them; then slowly press down on your eyebrows along their entire length.
4. Next, massage the facial muscles under the eyes from the nose to the ears. Separately, isolate the broad muscle on the right and left, which runs from the corner of the mouth to the earlobe. Grasp it widely with your fingers and pull it back slightly.
5. Find the pain point on the face near the ear, 1-2 centimeters above the earlobe. Massage it well.
6. Make 7-10 movements with your lips, as if kissing.
7. Finish the massage with light and gentle movements from the middle of the chin to the earlobe on the right and left.

8. There are many sensitive areas and muscles on the face that spasm during stress and negative events. Sometimes this even leads to the appearance of wrinkles (for example, a vertical wrinkle between the eyebrows or a horizontal wrinkle on the forehead). By affecting these areas and muscles, relaxing them, a “reverse” effect occurs—relaxation of the nervous system and reduction of negative emotions.

These easy activities can help you control your emotions. Regardless of your emotional condition, it is preferable to pick one workout and perform it every day in the morning and the evening to get the best results. Additionally, perform this exercise during high-stress occasions, such as right before exams, after tense days, or following conflict situations.

Paying Sports

Everyone can benefit greatly from sports. Individuals with diabetes are hardly an exception. Exercise improves mood and overall body tone, lowers blood sugar, lowers the risk of developing problems from diabetes, and increases the sensitivity of cells to insulin. However, there are certain unique aspects of participating in sports for those with diabetes, and you should obviously be aware of them. So, let's take a look at them.

1. **Initially, speak with your doctor.** Before starting any new exercise regimen, consult with a healthcare provider to ensure safety, particularly if you have complications like heart disease or nerve damage.
2. **Control your blood sugar levels** all the time you doing sport. Before exercise, your blood sugar should be in a safe range (typically between 100 and 250 mg/dL). If it's too low, eat a small snack. For longer or intense workouts, monitor blood sugar periodically to avoid hypoglycemia. After exercises, blood sugar may continue to drop for hours after activity, so keep an eye on levels and adjust insulin or food intake if necessary.
3. **CGM System.** For glycemic management monitoring, a CGM (continuous glucose monitoring) system can be a trustworthy friend and helper. This tiny gadget, which is normally worn on the arm above the elbow, will assist you in keeping an eye on your glycemia level while doing out. It uses Bluetooth to link to your smartphone and will notify you when your blood sugar falls below a predetermined level. This will allow you to consume a snack in time to avoid hypoglycemia.
4. **Choose the Right Type of Exercise.** Walking, cycling, swimming, and jogging help improve heart health and insulin sensitivity. Lifting weights or doing resistance exercises can help build muscle, which improves blood sugar regulation. Yoga and stretching help maintain flexibility, improve circulation, and reduce the risk of injury.
5. **Start Slowly and Gradually Increase Intensity.** Begin with low-impact activities, especially if you're new to exercise. Gradually increase duration and intensity as fitness improves. Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity per week, as recommended by the American Diabetes Association.
6. **Stay Hydrated.** Drink water before, during, and after exercise to prevent dehydration, which can affect blood sugar levels.
7. **Be Prepared for Hypoglycemia.** Carry fast-acting carbohydrates like glucose tablets, fruit juice, or snacks in case of low blood sugar during exercise. Symptoms of hypoglycemia include dizziness, sweating, shaking, and confusion.
8. **Time Your Exercise Wisely.** Avoid exercising during insulin peaks or when blood sugar levels are too low. It's best to exercise 1-3 hours after a meal when blood sugar levels are more stable. Consistency in the time of day you exercise helps with blood sugar control.
9. **Wear Proper Footwear.** Proper footwear is essential to avoid foot injuries, particularly for people with diabetic neuropathy. Regularly check your feet for blisters or sores.
10. **Adjust Medication and Insulin as Needed.** Depending on the type and duration of exercise, you may need to adjust insulin or diabetes medications to avoid low blood sugar. Work with your healthcare provider to make these adjustments.
11. **Incorporate Regular Activity into Daily Life.** In addition to structured exercise, aim to stay active

throughout the day by walking, taking stairs, and reducing sedentary time.

Finally, the last and most important rule is to listen to your body. Even the most experienced fitness trainer or the best doctor doesn't know your body better than you do. So, listen to its signals. Exercises or sports that are good for your family or friends may be completely unsuitable for you, or even harmful. Sudden pain, shortness of breath, dizziness, or other unpleasant symptoms should not be ignored. Also, record your condition after a workout: severe fatigue, muscle pain, and headaches may indicate that the intensity of your workout should be reduced or changed to another type of physical activity.

These guidelines can help persons with diabetes include sports and physical activity in their daily routine in a safe and effective manner. Regular exercise, performed consistently, helps improve insulin sensitivity and manage blood sugar, boosts overall health.

Eating out

Traveling, getting together with loved ones, and celebrating holidays with family are among the most anticipated and treasured occasions in people's lives. Yet these events are almost always accompanied by the consumption of unusual, sometimes not very healthy, or even exotic food. People may serve you delicious but inappropriate food because they frequently don't know about your diabetes or the diabetic diet you follow. It might be extremely tempting – even overwhelming at times – to taste these meals. However, even in these situations, make an effort to stay on track and keep in mind how important it is to adhere to a diabetic diet. The following advice can help you make beneficial and responsible use of your leisure time.

1. **Make a Plan.** Review the menu before going out, if possible. Many restaurants post their menus and nutrition information online, allowing you to choose healthier options in advance. Try to find items that fit into your diabetes meal plan, focusing on meals rich in lean proteins, vegetables, and healthy fats while avoiding excessive carbs and sugars. In most cases, it may be salads, grilled meat and fish, bean dishes, cheese plate, non-starchy vegetables, meals with avocado and nuts.
2. **Portion Control.** Restaurant portions are often much larger than necessary. Consider sharing a meal, asking for a half portion, or setting aside part of the meal to take home. Be mindful of the portion sizes of carbohydrates, as large portions can lead to blood sugar spikes.
3. **Avoid High-Carb Sides.** Try not to choose sides like bread, rice, pasta, or fries. Substitute with vegetables, salads, or other low-carb options when available.
4. **Watch for Hidden Sugars and Carbs.** Sauces, dressings, and marinades can contain hidden sugars and carbs. Ask for these on the side, or request options with minimal or no sugar. Be cautious of foods labeled as "healthy" (like fruit smoothies or low-fat dishes) as they can still be high in sugar or refined carbs. Potato starch, which thickens and gives creamier consistency to pureed or creamed soups, can also raise blood sugar levels. Do not be afraid to inquire about the dish's starch or other thickening components if you are still interested in trying it.
5. **Monitor Alcohol Intake.** If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation and be mindful of its effects on blood sugar. Alcohol can cause hypoglycemia (low blood sugar), especially if consumed on an empty stomach. Choose low-carb alcoholic beverages like dry wine or spirits mixed with sugar-free mixers, and avoid sugary cocktails.
6. **Balance Your Plate.** Aim to fill your plate with a balanced mix of proteins, fibrous vegetables, and small portions of healthy carbohydrates like whole grains or legumes. If possible, request extra vegetables as a side to increase fiber intake and keep blood sugar stable.
7. **Customize Your Order.** Don't be afraid to ask for modifications to make your meal more diabetes-friendly. Request grilled instead of fried, steamed veggies instead of starchy sides, or a green salad in place of carbs. You can also ask for no bread or chips at the table to reduce temptation.
8. **Time Your Meal and Medications.** Try to stick to regular meal times to maintain blood sugar levels. If your meal is delayed, have a small snack to prevent hypoglycemia. If you take insulin or medication for diabetes, adjust your timing based on when the meal is served. Talk to your doctor about any necessary adjustments

when dining out.

9. **Hydrate with Water.** Choose water, unsweetened tea, or sparkling water instead of sugary drinks like sodas or sweetened juices, which can cause blood sugar spikes.
10. **Be Cautious with Desserts.** If you're craving something sweet, consider sharing a dessert or opting for a fruit-based dessert with no added sugar. Many restaurants also offer sugar-free or low-carb dessert options. Alternatively, skip dessert and have a piece of fruit or a small snack at home that aligns with your diabetes meal plan.

Don't forget to monitor blood sugar after eating. Check it two hours after eating to see how the meal affected your levels. This can help you adjust your choices for future dining out experiences. Sometimes, dining out can involve social pressure or stress, which may lead to overeating. Focus on mindful eating by chewing slowly, enjoying your food, and paying attention to hunger and fullness signals.

Additionally, there are enough different recipes in the Breakfasts and Desserts parts of this book to prepare tasty low-carb snacks and treats to bring along to a party or on a trip. So, stay healthy and enjoy your leisure time!

Sweeteners

In the diabetic community, sweeteners are a matter of intense discussion. There are proponents of sweeteners, whilst others are vehemently opposed to them and believe they are unhealthy for the body. Naturally, each person must make their own decision in accordance with their unique physical attributes and inclinations. Let's examine the claims made by either side in relation to the usage of sweeteners.

What advantages do contemporary sweeteners offer, then?

They taste sweet, almost like sugar. Today's population enjoys eating a lot of sweet meals. Food producers add a lot of sugar and flavoring additives to a variety of sweets, cookies, ice cream, bars, chocolate, breakfast cereals, and snacks. Sweet types of apples, pears, plums, and other fruits and berries are grown thanks to agricultural technologies. The modern human palate is used to extremely sweet flavors. Our prehistoric predecessors were not familiar with a wide variety of sweet foods; wild strawberries and other berries were the sweetest foods they could eat. The majority of fruits that prehistoric people could harvest, including apples, were sour or sweet and sour.

When someone does not have any contraindications, they rarely restrict themselves from these small pleasures and do not consider the negative effects of consuming large amounts of sweets. However, dealing with illnesses that call for a sugar-free diet can be challenging and uncomfortable for a modern person. Since kids consume sweet goods and foods on a daily basis, they become accustomed to them, and a total prohibition on sweets may have a detrimental effect on their mental health. This should be considered, and sweeteners might be an excellent substitute for regular sugar if you believe that the sweet taste is vital to you.

Sweeteners such as stevia, aspartame, and sucralose have a low or zero glycemic index. This means that they do not cause an increase in blood glucose levels, as sugar can. As a result, people with diabetes can eat sweet foods and products with sweeteners without significant fluctuations in their blood glucose. Nowadays, the majority of sweeteners have negligible or no calories. This aids diabetics in managing their weight, which is crucial for preserving general health.

As sweeteners cannot be used by oral bacteria to make acid, which erodes tooth enamel, they do not promote tooth decay like sugar does. Modern sweeteners come in so many different flavors and forms that they may be employed in a wider range of dishes and drinks, increasing the options for dietary diversity.

Sweeteners, however, come with a number of drawbacks that need to be considered and remembered. Certain sweeteners, like sorbitol or maltitol, especially when ingested in excessive amounts, might result in gastrointestinal issues like bloating, flatulence, or diarrhea. Research on sweeteners' long-term health consequences is not always clear, even though the majority of them are thought to be safe.

According to several studies, eating sweeteners may lead to overeating because the body may mistakenly believe that calories are there when none are. Rarely, some sweeteners, such sucralose or aspartame, may cause allergic reactions in certain individuals. For certain users, some natural sweeteners, like erythritol or stevia, can be prohibitively pricey compared to conventional sugar. The majority of sweeteners have a distinct flavor or some aftertaste that some people find objectionable. This may have an impact on how prepared foods and drinks taste.

You can therefore decide for yourself whether or not to use sweeteners by weighing their benefits and drawbacks. People with diabetes can still enjoy sweet pastries and other sweetened foods while avoiding sugar by using contemporary sweeteners in moderation.

A Few Words about Carb Units

Carbohydrate units (CU), also known as bread units (BU) or carb exchanges, are a way for people with diabetes to manage their carbohydrate intake. This system simplifies the tracking of carbohydrates in foods, helping to maintain stable blood glucose levels. A carbohydrate unit is a measure used to quantify the amount of digestible carbohydrates in a food portion. One CU typically equals 10-12 grams of carbohydrates (depending on the system used, though – in many countries, it's commonly 12 grams).

People with diabetes need to carefully monitor their carbohydrate intake to avoid blood sugar spikes. Using CU allows for better control over insulin dosages, especially for those who use fast-acting insulin before meals. With CU it's easier to estimate the impact of food on blood glucose levels.

How to Calculate Carbohydrate Units:

1. **Read Food Labels:** Find the amount of carbohydrates per serving on the food packaging.
2. **Divide by 12:** If a serving contains 24 grams of carbohydrates, that equals 2 Carbohydrate Units ($24 \div 12 = 2$).
3. **Apply to Meals:** Calculate the total carbohydrate units for a meal by adding up the units from each food item.

Be careful with products that need to be cooked: the amount of carbohydrates may vary afterwards. For example, 100 grams of dry buckwheat contains 65-70 grams of carbohydrates, but 100 grams of boiled buckwheat porridge contains 40-45 grams of carbohydrates.

How many CU do you need to consume per day on average? It depends on many factors, such as your level of activity, age, gender, weight, and so on. In many diabetes diets, it's recommended to eat about 10-15 CU a day. This amount must be evenly distributed during a day, and include snacks and desserts.

Take a look to the examples of carbohydrate units in common and popular products:

- 1 slice of whole grain bread = 1 CU (approximately 12g carbs)
- 1 small apple (100g) = 1 CU (approximately 12g carbs)
- 1/2 cup cooked pasta = 2 CUs (approximately 24g carbs)
- 1 cup of milk = 1 CU (approximately 12g carbs)

Keeping a daily record of carbohydrate units helps to adjust insulin dosage appropriately based on the number of CUs consumed. You also can ensure consistent carbohydrate intake throughout the day, balance your meals, and promote better glucose control.

Chapter 2. Quick & Healthy Breakfasts

Breakfast on a diabetic menu should be balanced and contain a combination of proteins, healthy fats, and low-glycemic carbohydrates. But in the morning very often, there is no time to prepare a nutritious breakfast, and people replace it with a cup of coffee and a croissant. This is not a good idea for a healthy person, let alone a person with diabetes. Think about your breakfast in the evening and prepare for the next morning. Cottage cheese with fruit, yogurt parfait, whole grain toast with almond paste, boiled eggs with tomato, avocado toast, quick muffins or overnight chia seeds pudding can be good helpers in getting ready quickly in the morning.

As with the general menu, so with breakfast, it is important to choose carbohydrates that are absorbed slowly and do not cause a sharp increase in blood sugar, that is, carbohydrates with a low or medium GI. These can be whole-grain products such as oats, quinoa, whole-grain bread, as well as vegetables and fruits with a low GI, such as berries or apples.

Breakfast is one of the most important meals of the day, and skipping it can have negative health consequences. Breakfast helps jumpstart your metabolism after a night's sleep, which helps you burn calories more efficiently throughout the day. Skipping breakfast can lead to increased appetite and overeating throughout the day, which can negatively impact weight management and blood sugar levels.

Studies show that people who don't skip breakfast are in a better mood and experience less stress. This is because a balanced breakfast helps maintain a stable energy level.

Shakshuka

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 large onion, diced
 1 large red bell pepper, diced
 3 cloves garlic, minced
 1 teaspoon ground cumin
 1 teaspoon ground paprika
 1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
 1 can (28 ounces) crushed tomatoes
 Salt and pepper to taste
 4 large eggs
 Fresh parsley, chopped (for garnish)

DIRECTIONS

Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the diced onion and bell pepper. Sauté for about 5-7 minutes until the vegetables are softened.

Add the minced garlic, ground cumin, ground paprika, ground coriander, and cayenne pepper (if using). Cook for about 1 minute, stirring frequently, until the spices are fragrant.

Pour in the crushed tomatoes and season with salt and pepper. Stir to combine and let the mixture simmer for about 10 minutes, allowing the flavors to meld and the sauce to thicken slightly.

Make 4 small wells in the tomato mixture using the back of a spoon. Crack an egg into each well. Reduce the heat to low, cover the skillet, and cook for about 7-10 minutes until the eggs are cooked to your desired doneness.

Remove the skillet from the heat. Garnish with chopped fresh parsley or cilantro. Serve hot, directly from the skillet!

Per 1 serving:	Energy 120 kcal	Proteins 3g	Carbohydrates 6g	Fats 6g
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Ray Waffles with Mozzarella

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup Greek yogurt (unsweetened)
 1 cup whole grain rye flour
 1 large egg
 1 tablespoon oil (olive or sunflower)
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1 teaspoon baking powder
 1–2 tablespoons water or milk (if needed for consistency)
 1 pack mozzarella, sliced
 1 small avocado
 Fresh basil (for serving)

DIRECTIONS

In a mixing bowl, whisk together the Greek yogurt and egg until smooth.
 Add rye flour, baking powder, and salt. Mix until combined.
 Add oil and stir in. If batter is too thick, add a tablespoon or two of water or milk to moisten.
 Preheat a waffle iron and lightly grease if needed. You may also use a skillet covered with small amount of oil.
 Pour enough batter to cover the waffle grid, close the lid, and cook until golden and crisp. If using skillet, fry the waffles 2-4 minutes for each side.
 Serve warm, topped with a mozzarella slice, fresh basil leaves, or a few slices of avocado.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 210 kcal	Proteins 13g	Carbohydrates 16g	Fats 9g
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Salmon Eggsadilla

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 5 MIN

FOR THE EGG TORTILLA:

5 large eggs
 3 tablespoons milk (optional)
 A pinch of salt, pepper
 2 teaspoon olive oil or unsalted butter (for frying)

FOR THE FILLING:

100g smoked or lightly salted salmon, sliced
 1 medium fresh cucumber, cut in sticks
 4 tbs cream cheese
 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

DIRECTIONS

Whisk the eggs with milk, salt, and pepper until well combined.
 Heat a nonstick pan with a little oil or butter and pour in part of the egg mixture to form a thin, round tortilla. Cook for 1–2 minutes on each side until set. Repeat for the next tortillas; you should get 4 thin tortillas.
 Let the tortillas cool slightly, then spread cream cheese over one side of each.
 Cut cucumber vertically into long sticks. Add cucumber sticks and salmon, then sprinkle with chopped parsley.
 Fold like a quesadilla or roll like a wrap.
 Slice and serve immediately, optionally with a squeeze of lemon or extra herbs.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 235 kcal	Proteins 18g	Carbohydrates 3g	Fats 16g
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Tuna Toast

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 0 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 cans tuna (5 oz each, in water)
 2 boiled eggs, chopped
 1 green onion, finely chopped
 1/2 cup sour cream (reduced fat)
 Salt and pepper to taste
 2 pieces whole-grain toast
 Fresh dill, chopped (for serving)

DIRECTIONS

In a medium bowl, combine the drained tuna, chopped boiled eggs, finely chopped green onion, and sour cream. Mix until well combined. Add salt and pepper to taste, adjusting the seasoning as desired.

Toast the whole-grain bread slices until golden brown.

Spread the tuna mixture evenly over the toasted bread slices.

Season with fresh chopped dill if desired

Serve immediately as an open-faced sandwich with a cup of tea.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 250 kcal	Proteins 26g	Carbohydrates 20g	Fats 10g
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Veggie Omelet

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

6 large eggs (or egg whites)
 1/2 cup diced bell peppers
 1/2 cup diced onions
 1/2 cup chopped spinach
 1/2 cup diced tomatoes
 1/2 cup sliced mushrooms
 1/2 cup shredded cheese (optional)
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Crack the eggs into a bowl and whisk them together. Add a pinch of salt and pepper.

Heat the olive oil in a non-stick skillet over medium heat. Add the diced onions and bell peppers, and sauté for 2-3 minutes until they begin to soften.

Add the sliced mushrooms and cook for another 2 minutes. Add the diced tomatoes and chopped spinach. Cook until the spinach is wilted and the vegetables are tender (about 2-3 minutes).

Pour the whisked eggs evenly over the cooked vegetables in the skillet. Let the eggs cook undisturbed until they begin to set around the edges (about 2-3 minutes).

Use a spatula to gently lift the edges of the omelet, allowing any uncooked eggs to flow underneath. Sprinkle the shredded cheese on top, if using.

Once the eggs are fully set and the cheese is melted, carefully fold the omelet in half. Slide the omelet onto a plate. Serve immediately.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 200 kcal	Proteins 12g	Carbohydrates 5g	Fats 15g
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Quick Green Wrap

SERVINGS: 2

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 0 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 spinach tortillas (or other healthy tortillas such as whole-grain or vegetable)
 1/2 cup arugula
 1/2 cup iceberg lettuce, chopped
 1/4 cucumber, thinly sliced
 4 slices ham (lean, low-sodium)
 2 tablespoons sundried tomatoes
 1 tablespoon cashews, chopped
 2 tablespoons fresh basil, chopped
 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped
 1/4 teaspoon salt (optional)
 2 tablespoons sour cream (light, low-fat)
 1 teaspoon mustard

DIRECTIONS

Chop the arugula, iceberg lettuce, cucumber, sundried tomatoes, cashews, basil, and parsley.
 In a small bowl, mix together the sour cream, mustard, and salt (if using).
 Lay out the spinach tortillas and spread the sour cream mixture evenly over each one.
 Place the arugula, iceberg lettuce, and cucumber slices evenly on each tortilla. Layer the ham slices on top of the greens, then sprinkle on the chopped sundried tomatoes, cashews, basil, and parsley.
 Roll the tortillas tightly to form wraps. You can cut them in half for easier serving.
 Serve immediately as a quick and healthy breakfast or take them with you as a snack.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 250 kcal	Proteins 12g	Carbohydrates 22g	Fats 12g
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Muffins in Microwave Oven

SERVINGS: 2

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 2 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 tablespoons almond flour
 1 tablespoon coconut flour
 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
 Sugar-free sweetener by taste
 1 large egg
 2 tablespoons unsweetened almond milk
 1 tablespoon melted coconut oil or butter
 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
 A pinch of salt

DIRECTIONS

In a small bowl, whisk together the almond flour, coconut flour, baking powder, sweetener, and salt.
 Add the egg, unsweetened almond milk, melted coconut oil (or butter), and vanilla extract to the dry ingredients. Stir until a smooth batter forms.
 Divide the batter evenly between two microwave-safe mugs. Microwave each mug separately on high for 60-120 seconds, or until the muffins rise and are cooked through. Insert a toothpick into the center of the muffin. If it comes out clean, the muffin is done.
 Let the muffins cool. You may add in sugar-free chocolate chips, a pinch of cinnamon, or a few berries before cooking for flavors.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 180 kcal	Proteins 7g	Carbohydrates 4g	Fats 15g
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Avocado Toast

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 5 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 ripe avocados
 4 slices of whole grain or low-carb bread
 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)
 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
 1 boiled egg, 5-6 cherry tomatoes (optional, for serving)

DIRECTIONS

Toast the slices of bread to your desired level of crispiness, about 5 minutes. While the bread is toasting, cut the avocados in half, remove the pits, and scoop the flesh into a bowl. Add the lemon juice, salt, black pepper, and red pepper flakes (if using) to the avocado. Mash until smooth.

Spread the mashed avocado mixture evenly on each slice of toasted bread.

Drizzle each slice with extra virgin olive oil before serving. Serve immediately.

This meal can be eaten as a standalone dish or with a boiled egg and cherry tomatoes for a longer feeling of satiety.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 260 kcal	Proteins 5g	Carbohydrates 18g	Fats 22g
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Spinach Omelet

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 large eggs
 1 cup fresh spinach, chopped
 1/4 cup onion, finely chopped
 1/4 cup bell pepper, finely chopped
 1/3 cup milk (optional, for fluffiness)
 Salt and black pepper by taste
 1 tablespoon olive oil or butter
 1/4 cup shredded cheese (optional, for extra flavor)

DIRECTIONS

Wash and chop the spinach, onion, and bell pepper. Crack the eggs into a bowl, add the milk (if using), and whisk together until well combined. Stir in the salt and pepper.

Heat the olive oil or butter in a non-stick skillet over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and bell pepper and sauté for 2-3 minutes until softened.

Add the chopped spinach to the skillet and cook for another 1-2 minutes until wilted.

Pour the egg mixture over the sautéed vegetables in the skillet. Let the eggs cook undisturbed for 2-3 minutes until they start to set around the edges.

Reduce the heat to medium-low, cover the skillet, and cook for another 2-4 minutes until the eggs are fully set and cooked through.

If using cheese, sprinkle it over the omelet. Turn off the heat and let the cheese melt for about 2-3 minutes under the lid. Slide the omelet onto a plate, and serve immediately.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 200 kcal	Proteins 12g	Carbohydrates 4g	Fats 15g
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Low-Carb Pancakes

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

3 large eggs
 3/4 cup (200g) unsweetened almond milk or any other low-carb milk alternative
 1/2 cup coconut flour
 2 teaspoon psyllium powder
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
 Sweetener by taste (such as a few drops of stevia or a 1 tablespoon of erythritol)
 1 tablespoon vegetable oil (for frying)

DIRECTIONS

In a medium-sized bowl, whisk together the eggs, almond milk, psyllium, vanilla extract, and salt until well combined. Add sweetener and coconut flour, whisking continuously to prevent lumps. Mix until smooth.
 The batter will be thick.
 Heat a non-stick skillet over medium-low heat. Lightly oil the pan. Pour about 1-2 tablespoons of batter per pancake onto the skillet. Cook for 2-3 minutes on each side, or until the edges start to set. Flip carefully and cook for another 2-3 minutes until golden brown. Continue with the remaining batter.
 Serve the pancakes warm with fresh berries, sugar-free syrup, or a dollop of Greek yogurt.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 190 kcal	Proteins 10g	Carbohydrates 6g	Fats 8.7g
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Breakfast Burrito

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 whole grain or low-carb tortillas
 6 large eggs
 1/4 cup unsweetened almond milk
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 cup fresh spinach, chopped
 1 medium bell pepper, diced
 1 small onion, diced
 1/2 cup black beans, rinsed and drained
 1/2 avocado, diced
 1/4 cup salsa
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a bowl, whisk together the eggs and almond milk. Season with a pinch of salt and pepper.
 Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and bell pepper, and sauté about 3-4 minutes.
 Add the spinach to the skillet and cook about 1-2 minutes.
 Pour the egg mixture into the skillet and cook, stirring occasionally, until the eggs are scrambled and fully cooked, about 4-5 minutes.
 Add the black beans to the skillet and stir to combine. Remove from heat.
 Warm the tortillas in a separate pan or microwave until pliable. Divide the egg and vegetable mixture evenly among the tortillas. Top each burrito with diced avocado and a spoonful of salsa. Roll up the tortillas to form burritos. Serve immediately and enjoy.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 300 kcal	Proteins 16g	Carbohydrates 30g	Fats 14g
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Quinoa Breakfast Bowl

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup quinoa, rinsed
 2 cups water
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1 cup fresh spinach, chopped
 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
 1 avocado, diced
 4 large eggs
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1/4 cup feta cheese, crumbled
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a medium saucepan, bring the quinoa, water, and salt to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for about 15 minutes, or until the quinoa is tender and water is absorbed. Fluff with a fork.

While the quinoa is cooking, heat the olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Crack the eggs into the skillet and cook to your desired level of doneness (sunny side up, over easy, etc.).

In a large bowl, combine the cooked quinoa, chopped spinach, and cherry tomatoes.

Divide the quinoa mixture evenly among four bowls.

Top each bowl with diced avocado, a cooked egg, and a sprinkle of feta cheese. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Serve immediately and enjoy!

Per 1 serving:	Energy 140 kcal	Proteins 12g	Carbohydrates 15g	Fats 4g
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Zucchini Omelet

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 large eggs
 1 medium zucchini, grated
 1/2 small onion, finely chopped
 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
 1/2 cup low-fat milk
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Fresh parsley for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

In a bowl, beat the eggs and milk together until well combined. Season with salt and pepper.

Heat the olive oil in a non-stick skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and cook until softened, about 3 minutes. Add the grated zucchini to the skillet and cook for another 3 minutes until the zucchini is tender.

Pour the egg mixture over the vegetables in the skillet. Cover the skillet with a lid and cook about 7 minutes on low heat until the eggs are fully set. Sprinkle the Parmesan cheese evenly over the top.

Transfer omelet to a plate. Garnish with fresh parsley if desired. Serve warm.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 160 kcal	Proteins 12g	Carbohydrates 4g	Fats 11g
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Colorful & Crispy Veggie Bowl

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup boiled brown rice (cooled)
 4 radishes, thinly sliced
 1 medium carrot, grated
 1 cup shredded iceberg lettuce
 1 cup fresh spinach
 1 red bell pepper, sliced
 2 green onions, chopped
 1 medium avocado, sliced
 1/4 cup cashews, roughly chopped
 1 tablespoon sesame seeds
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
 1/2 teaspoon honey
 1/2 teaspoon salt

DIRECTIONS

Prepare the rice in advance (maybe the evening before). Use the recipe from the chapter “Grains & Pasta”.
 Chop and slice all vegetables: radishes, carrot, iceberg, spinach, bell pepper, and green onion.
 Layer the bowl starting with brown rice as the base.
 Top neatly with vegetables: arrange spinach, iceberg, radish, bell pepper, grated carrot, and green onion over the rice.
 Add avocado, cashew, and sesame seeds on top.
 Whisk dressing ingredients together in a small bowl and drizzle over the assembled bowl.
 Serve fresh immediately for a nutritious and filling meal or take it to have breakfast outside!

Per 1 serving:	Energy 290 kcal	Proteins 6g	Carbohydrates 28g	Fats 15g
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Cocoa Chia Cream

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

CHILL TIME: 3-4 HOURS

INGREDIENTS

2 cups unsweetened almond milk
 6 tablespoons chia seeds
 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
 1–2 tablespoons erythritol or another sweetener (to taste)
 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
 A pinch of salt
 Optional topping: a few fresh raspberries or crushed nuts

DIRECTIONS

In a medium bowl or jar, whisk together almond milk, cocoa powder, sweetener, vanilla extract, and salt until smooth.
 Add chia seeds and stir thoroughly to prevent clumping. Let sit for 10 minutes, then stir again to evenly distribute the seeds.
 Cover and refrigerate for at least 3–4 hours or overnight until thick and pudding-like.
 Before serving, stir again and adjust sweetness if needed.
 Serve chilled, optionally topped with a few raspberries or chopped almonds.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 140 kcal	Proteins 10g	Carbohydrates 8g	Fats 8g
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Cauliflower Breakfast Hash

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 medium head cauliflower, chopped into florets
 4 large eggs
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
 Fresh parsley for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

In a large pot, bring water to a boil and cook the cauliflower florets for about 5 minutes, until just tender. Drain well.
 In a large bowl, whisk the eggs, then add salt, black pepper, and garlic powder.
 Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the drained cauliflower and sauté for 2-3 minutes.
 Pour the egg mixture over the cauliflower in the skillet, stirring gently to combine. Keep stirring so that the cauliflower is evenly browned. Continue cooking for 2-3 minutes until the eggs start to set.
 Sprinkle the grated Parmesan cheese on top. Cover the skillet with a lid, set stovetop to the lowest heat, and wait for 5-7 minutes, or until the eggs are fully set and the cheese is melted.
 Garnish with fresh parsley if desired and serve warm. Add a piece of whole-grain bread with cheese for more filling breakfast.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 150 kcal	Proteins 8g	Carbohydrates 8g	Fats 10g
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Sweet Millet with Berries & Nuts

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup millet
 3 cups water
 1 tbsp sunflower oil
 1–2 tbsp erythritol (to taste)
 2 tbsp dried or fresh cranberries (unsweetened)
 1/2 cup fresh or frozen strawberries, sliced
 2 tbsp chopped nuts (walnuts, almonds, or hazelnuts)
 1 tbsp pumpkin seeds
 1/2 teaspoon salt

DIRECTIONS

Rinse the millet under running water. In a small pot, bring 3 cups of water to a boil, then add the millet and salt. Reduce heat to low, don't cover, and simmer for about 15–20 minutes or until the water is absorbed and millet is soft. Add sunflower oil to the cooked millet and stir gently.
 You may also cook the millet overnight using a slow cooker or multicooker. Use the same amount of millet and water.
 Mix in erythritol, adjusting sweetness to your taste.
 Fold in cranberries, strawberries, and let sit covered for 2–3 minutes (if using frozen berries, let them warm through).
 Top with chopped nuts and pumpkin seeds just before serving.
 Serve warm for the best flavor and texture.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 235 kcal	Proteins 5g	Carbohydrates 27g	Fats 11g
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Chapter 3. Salads

Salads are a great option for a nutritious breakfast, a delicious lunch, or a light dinner. A festive table is often adorned with salads. Salads are typically high in vitamins, minerals and fiber, which not only support immunity and general health, but also prevent abrupt spikes in blood sugar.

Salads are low in calories, and therefore they can aid in maintaining a healthy weight, which is crucial for managing diabetes. Using fresh veggies and herbs lowers inflammation and the risk of complications associated with diabetes by supplying the body with antioxidants. Salads can also be easily customized to accommodate any dietary requirement by including healthy fats – like avocados or almonds – and proteins – like chicken, fish, or lentils – in them. Salads are therefore the perfect choice for a satisfying and healthful diabetic supper.

This section presents many different salads, from simple and light to nutritious and festive.

Asian Chicken Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
1 tablespoon olive oil
4 cups mixed greens (e.g., spinach, romaine, and arugula)
1 cup shredded red cabbage
1 cup shredded carrots
1/2 cup sliced almonds, toasted
1/4 cup green onions, chopped
1/4 cup cilantro, chopped
2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
2 tablespoons rice vinegar
1 tablespoon sesame oil
1 tablespoon honey (optional)
1 clove garlic, minced
1 teaspoon grated ginger
Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a skillet set over medium-high heat, warm the olive oil. Add salt and pepper to the chicken breasts for seasoning.
Cook the chicken breasts for about 5-6 minutes on each side, or until fully cooked. Remove from heat and let cool slightly on a paper napkin (to allow extra oil absorption). Slice breasts thinly.
In a large salad dish, combine the mixed greens, shredded red cabbage, shredded carrots, toasted sliced almonds, green onions, and cilantro.
In a small bowl, mix together the soy sauce, rice vinegar, sesame oil, honey (if using), minced garlic, grated ginger, salt, and pepper to make the dressing.
Pour the dressing over the salad and toss to coat evenly.
Top the salad with the sliced chicken. Serve immediately.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 300 kcal	Proteins 25g	Carbohydrates 9g	Fats 18g
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Prosciutto & Pears Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 0 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 medium pears, sliced
 2 cups baby spinach
 1 cup arugula
 4 slices prosciutto, torn into smaller pieces
 1/4 cup crumbled blue cheese (e.g., Dor Blue)
 2 tablespoons chopped walnuts
 2 tablespoons chopped cashews
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 1 teaspoon honey
 1 teaspoon mustard
 1/2 teaspoon salt (adjust to taste)

DIRECTIONS

Prepare the dressing: in a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, lemon juice, honey, mustard, and salt until well combined.
 In a large salad bowl, combine the baby spinach and arugula. Top the greens with sliced pears, chopped walnuts, and cashews.
 Arrange the torn prosciutto and crumbled blue cheese over the salad.
 Pour the dressing evenly over the salad. Toss gently to combine.
 Divide the salad into four portions and serve immediately.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 200 kcal	Proteins 7g	Carbohydrates 14g	Fats 14g
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Cabbage & Ham Festive Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 cups Beijing cabbage, finely sliced
 1/2 cup sliced ham
 2 boiled eggs, chopped
 1/2 cup sweet corn (canned, drained)
 1 tablespoon fresh dill, chopped
 1/3 cup sour cream
 1 clove garlic, minced
 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Finely slice the Beijing cabbage, chop the ham and boiled eggs, and drain the sweet corn. In a large salad bowl, combine the cabbage, ham, eggs, sweet corn, and fresh dill.
 In a small bowl, whisk together the sour cream, minced garlic, mustard, salt, and pepper until smooth.
 Pour the dressing over the salad and toss gently to coat all the ingredients evenly. Taste the salad and adjust the seasoning with more salt or pepper if needed.
 Divide into 4 portions and enjoy fresh. Letting the salad sit in the refrigerator for 10–15 minutes before serving allows the flavors to meld..

Per 1 serving:	Energy 70 kcal	Proteins 1g	Carbohydrates 7g	Fats 5g
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Nutrient-Rich Green Bowl

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 7 MIN

COOK TIME: 0 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 medium cucumber, sliced
 1 cup fresh arugula
 1 cup fresh iceberg lettuce, chopped
 1 cup fresh spinach, chopped
 1 cup fresh salad greens (such as butter lettuce or romaine)
 1 ripe avocado, diced
 1 green onion, chopped
 1 tablespoon fresh dill, chopped
 1 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
 1 teaspoon honey (or sugar-free honey substitute)
 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
 Salt to taste

DIRECTIONS

Wash and chop the cucumber, avocado, dill, parsley, and green onion. Wash and cut arugula, iceberg lettuce, spinach, and salad greens into big pieces. Place all the vegetables and herbs in a large bowl.

In a small bowl, prepare dressing: whisk together the olive oil, apple cider vinegar, honey, Dijon mustard, and a pinch of salt until the dressing is smooth.

Pour the dressing over the salad ingredients and toss everything together until well coated. Taste the salad and adjust the seasoning by adding more salt if needed.

Divide the salad into individual servings and enjoy immediately. You can garnish the salad with additional seeds, such as sunflower seeds or sesame.

This salad is best served fresh. If making ahead, store the dressing separately and toss just before serving.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 120 kcal	Proteins 2g	Carbohydrates 8g	Fats 12g
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Quick Tomato Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 7 MIN

COOK TIME: 0 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 large tomatoes, chopped
 1 bell pepper, chopped
 1/2 red onion, thinly sliced
 1/4 cup fresh basil leaves, chopped
 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a large bowl, combine the chopped tomatoes, chopped bell pepper, thinly sliced red onion, and chopped fresh basil leaves.

In a small bowl, mix together the extra virgin olive oil, balsamic vinegar, salt, and pepper.

Pour the dressing over the tomato mixture and toss gently to combine.

Serve immediately or refrigerate for up to 10 minutes before serving for flavors to meld.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 70 kcal	Proteins 1g	Carbohydrates 7g	Fats 5g
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Caesar Salad with Chicken

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 Salt and pepper to taste
 1 large head of Romaine lettuce, chopped
 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
 1/2 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
 1/4 cup plain Greek yogurt
 2 tablespoons lemon juice
 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
 1 clove garlic, minced
 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the grill or a skillet over medium-high heat. Season the chicken breasts with olive oil, salt, and pepper.
 Grill or cook the chicken breasts in the skillet for 5-6 minutes on each side, or until fully cooked. Let the chicken rest for a few minutes, then slice it thinly.
 In a large bowl, combine the chopped Romaine lettuce, grated Parmesan cheese, and cherry tomatoes.
 In a small bowl, whisk together the Greek yogurt, lemon juice, Dijon mustard, minced garlic, Worcestershire sauce, olive oil, salt, and black pepper to make the dressing.
 Pour the dressing over the salad and toss to coat evenly.
 Top the salad with the sliced chicken.
 Serve immediately.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 250 kcal	Proteins 10g	Carbohydrates 28g	Fats 11g
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Beet & Goat Cheese Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 medium beets (roasted or boiled), sliced
 4 cups mixed greens (e.g., arugula, spinach, and kale)
 1/4 cup crumbled goat cheese
 1/4 cup walnuts, toasted
 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Wrap each beet in foil and roast for 40–45 minutes, or until tender. You can also boil beets in low heating for 50-60 minutes, or until tender.
 Toast the walnuts in a dry skillet over medium heat for 3-4 minutes, until fragrant. Once the beets are done, allow them to cool slightly, then peel and slice them into wedges.
 In a large bowl, combine the mixed greens, sliced cooked beets, crumbled goat cheese, and toasted walnuts.
 Blend the extra virgin olive oil, balsamic vinegar, salt, and pepper in a small bowl. Drizzle the salad with the dressing and gently toss to coat. Serve right away.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 106 kcal	Proteins 3g	Carbohydrates 8g	Fats 8g
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Herbed Feta Vegetable Mix Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 large cucumber, diced
 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
 1/2 red onion, thinly sliced
 1/2 cup Kalamata olives, pitted and halved
 1/4 cup feta cheese, crumbled
 1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped
 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 1 teaspoon dried oregano
 Fresh or dry basil
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a large bowl, combine the diced cucumber, cherry tomatoes, red onion, Kalamata olives, feta cheese, and fresh parsley.
 In a small bowl, whisk together the extra virgin olive oil, lemon juice, dried oregano, salt, and pepper.
 Pour the dressing over the salad and toss to coat all ingredients evenly. Sprinkle with dried basil or garnish with fresh basil leaves.
 Serve immediately or refrigerate for up to 1 hour before serving for flavors to meld.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 130 kcal	Proteins 3g	Carbohydrates 8g	Fats 10g
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Salad with Shrimp and Avocado

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 5 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 lb (450g) large shrimp, peeled, deveined
 1 clove garlic, sliced
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
 6 cups mixed greens (e.g., spinach, arugula)
 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
 1 avocado, diced
 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1/4 teaspoon Dijon mustard
 Salt and pepper by taste

DIRECTIONS

Heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Season the shrimp with sliced garlic, salt, and black pepper.
 Cook the shrimps for about 2-3 minutes on each side, until pink and opaque. Remove the shrimp from skillet to white paper.
 Leave the shrimp on a paper napkin so that extra oil is absorbed into the napkin. Let cool slightly.
 In a large bowl, combine the mixed greens, cherry tomatoes, and avocado.
 In a small bowl, whisk together the lemon juice, extra virgin olive oil, Dijon mustard, salt, and black pepper to make the dressing.
 Pour the dressing over the salad and toss to coat evenly.
 Top the salad with the cooked shrimp. Serve immediately.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 250 kcal	Proteins 20g	Carbohydrates 10g	Fats 16g
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Spinach & Strawberry Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 5 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 cups fresh spinach leaves
 1 cup strawberries, sliced
 1/4 cup sliced almonds, toasted
 1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese (optional)
 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 teaspoon honey (optional)
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Toasted sliced almonds, feta cheese (if using), sliced strawberries, and fresh spinach leaves should all be combined in a big dish.
 Mix the extra virgin olive oil, honey (if using), balsamic vinegar, salt, and pepper in a small bowl.
 Drizzle the salad with the dressing and gently mix to coat.
 Serve right away.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 140 kcal	Proteins 3g	Carbohydrates 10g	Fats 10g
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Quinoa Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup quinoa
 2 cups water
 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
 1 cucumber, diced
 1/2 red bell pepper, diced
 1/4 red onion, finely chopped
 1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped
 1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese (optional)
 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
 2 tablespoons lemon juice
 1 clove garlic, minced
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

DIRECTIONS

Rinse the quinoa under cold water. In a medium saucepan, bring the water to a boil. Add the quinoa, reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for about 15 minutes or until the quinoa is tender and water is absorbed. Let it cool.
 Combine the cooked quinoa, cherry tomatoes, cucumber, red bell pepper, red onion, and parsley in a large bowl.
 Whisk together the extra virgin olive oil, lemon juice, minced garlic, salt, and black pepper in a small bowl.
 Pour the dressing over the quinoa mixture and toss to coat evenly.
 If using, sprinkle the crumbled feta cheese on top.
 Serve immediately or refrigerate for up to 2 hours to let the flavors meld.
 Serve chilled or at room temperature.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 180 kcal	Proteins 5g	Carbohydrates 12g	Fats 14g
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Avocado & Black Bean Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 5 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 large avocado, diced
 1 can (15 oz) black beans, drained, rinsed
 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
 1/2 red onion, finely chopped
 1/2 red bell pepper, diced
 1/4 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
 2 tablespoons lime juice
 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a large bowl, combine the diced avocado, black beans, cherry tomatoes, red onion, red bell pepper, and fresh cilantro.
 In a small bowl, whisk together the lime juice, extra virgin olive oil, ground cumin, salt, and pepper.
 Pour the dressing over the salad and toss gently to coat all the ingredients evenly.
 Serve immediately or refrigerate for up to 1 hour before serving for the flavors to meld.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 140 kcal	Proteins 3g	Carbohydrates 10g	Fats 10g
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Berry & Walnut Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 0 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 cups mixed greens (e.g., spinach, arugula, and kale)
 1 cup fresh berries (e.g., blueberries, raspberries, and strawberries)
 1/4 cup walnuts, toasted
 1/4 cup crumbled goat cheese or feta cheese (optional)
 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
 1 teaspoon honey (optional)
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Toasted walnuts, crumbled cheese (if used), fresh berries, and mixed greens should all be combined in a big bowl.
 In a small dish, blend together the balsamic vinegar, extra virgin olive oil, Dijon mustard, honey (if using), salt, and pepper.
 Pour the dressing over the salad and toss gently to coat.
 Serve immediately.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 180 kcal	Proteins 4g	Carbohydrates 12g	Fats 14g
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Arugula Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 5 MIN

INGREDIENTS

5 oz. baby arugula
 1/3 cup parmesan, sliced into thick pieces
 1/2 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
 3-4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
 1 tablespoon lemon zest
 2 tablespoons lemon juice, fresh
 1 tablespoon wine or rice vinegar
 1/3 teaspoon honey
 1 glove garlic, crushed
 A pinch of salt

DIRECTIONS

In a small bowl prepare the dressing: mix together the olive oil, wine or rice vinegar, lemon zest, lemon juice, honey, crushed garlic, and a pinch of salt.
 In a big salad bowl, combine baby arugula, grated parmesan, and cherry tomatoes.
 Pour the dressing over the salad and toss to coat evenly. Before serving leave it for 5-10 minutes to allow the flavors to meld.
 Enjoy this super-easy and very healthy salad!

Per 1 serving:	Energy 160 kcal	Proteins 3g	Carbohydrates 5g	Fats 15g
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Lentil Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 25 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup dried green or brown lentils
 3 cups water
 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
 1 cucumber, diced
 1/2 red onion, finely chopped
 1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped
 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
 2 tablespoons lemon juice
 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
 1 clove garlic, minced
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Let the lentils sit in cold water to rinse. Heat the water and lentils in a medium-sized saucepan till they boil. After lowering the heat, simmer the lentils for 20-25 minutes, or until they become soft. After draining, allow to cool.
 The cooked lentils, cherry tomatoes, cucumber, red onion, and fresh parsley should all be combined in a big bowl.
 Blend the extra virgin olive oil, red wine vinegar, lemon juice, garlic minced, salt, and pepper in a small container.
 Pour the dressing over the lentil mixture and toss to coat evenly.
 To allow the flavors to mingle, leave the salad for approximately 10 minutes. Before serving, toss once more.
 Serve either room temperature or cold.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 90 kcal	Proteins 2g	Carbohydrates 8g	Fats 7g
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Cucumber & Radish Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 8 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 medium cucumbers, chopped
 6 radishes, thinly sliced
 2 boiled eggs, chopped
 2 green onions, chopped
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 cup sour cream
 1/4 cup Greek yogurt
 Fresh dill, chopped

DIRECTIONS

Chop the cucumbers, the boiled eggs, green onions, and dill. Slice the radishes. In a large bowl, combine the chopped and sliced ingredients.

Prepare dressing: in a small bowl, mix the sour cream and Greek yogurt until well combined. Add salt by taste.

Pour the dressing over the salad and toss until all ingredients are evenly coated.

Serve immediately or refrigerate for 10-15 minutes to allow the flavors to meld.

Per 1 serving:

Energy 150 kcal

Proteins 7g

Carbohydrates 9g

Fats 9g

Beetroot & Green Beans Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

400 g boiled beetroot, diced
 400 g green beans, trimmed and roasted
 2 tablespoons pumpkin seeds
 1 tablespoon sesame seeds
 2–3 garlic cloves, minced
 2 tablespoon olive oil
 1 teaspoon lemon juice
 Salt to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a medium skillet, heat 1/2 tablespoon of olive oil over medium-high heat. Add green beans and sauté for about 7-5 minutes, until tender but still crisp. Add minced garlic, salt, and pepper. Remove green beans from the skillet, set aside.

In a small skillet, first toast the pumpkin seeds, then the sesame seeds until golden brown.

Dice the boiled beetroot.

Make the dressing: in a small bowl, combine the remaining olive oil, lemon juice, and a pinch of salt.

In a large bowl, combine beetroot, roasted pumpkin seeds, and roasted green beans. Pour the dressing over and mix gently.

Sprinkle with sesame seeds.

You may serve immediately or chill for 10–15 minutes to allow flavors to meld.

Per 1 serving:

Energy 195 kcal

Proteins 4g

Carbohydrates 17g

Fats 8g

Easy Cabbage Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 5 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1/2 head of green cabbage, thinly sliced
1 large cucumber, thinly sliced
1/2 red onion, thinly sliced
1/4 cup fresh dill, chopped
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
1 tablespoon lemon juice
Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a large bowl, combine the thinly sliced cabbage, cucumber, and red onion.
Add the chopped fresh dill to the bowl.
In a small bowl, whisk together the olive oil, apple cider vinegar, lemon juice, salt, and pepper.
Pour the dressing over the cabbage mixture and toss to coat evenly.
Let the salad sit for about 10 minutes to allow the flavors to meld.
Toss again before serving.
Serve immediately or refrigerate for up to 2 hours before serving for a more chilled salad.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 70 kcal	Proteins 1g	Carbohydrates 7g	Fats 5g
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Celery & Tofu Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 5 MIN

INGREDIENTS

3-4 medium celery stalks, thinly sliced
150g firm tofu, cubed
1 medium green apple, chopped (leave peel on for more fiber)
1 tablespoon chopped parsley or dill (optional)
1-2 tablespoons crushed walnuts or sunflower seeds (optional, for crunch)
100g plain Greek yogurt (2-5% fat)
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard (optional)
1 teaspoon lemon juice or apple cider vinegar
Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Dice celery and apple into bite-sized pieces. Press tofu to remove moisture, then cube it. In a large bowl, combine celery, apple, tofu, and herbs.
In a small bowl, whisk together Greek yogurt, mustard, lemon juice, salt, and pepper. Taste the sauce and adjust seasoning.
Pour dressing over the salad and toss gently until evenly coated. Optionally, sprinkle with nuts or seeds for crunch and healthy fats.
Serve immediately, or chill for 10-15 minutes to blend flavors.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 95 kcal	Proteins 7g	Carbohydrates 7.3g	Fats 4.5g
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Detox Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 0 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 small fresh beetroot, peeled, grated
 1 medium carrot, peeled, grated
 1 cup thinly sliced fresh cabbage
 1/2 cup grated daikon radish
 1 medium bell pepper, sliced
 1 small green apple, diced
 1/4 small red onion, thinly sliced
 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill
 2 tablespoons sunflower oil
 2 garlic gloves, finely grated
 1 teaspoon honey (optional)
 1/2 teaspoon salt (or to taste)

DIRECTIONS

Put the finely sliced cabbage into a small bowl, season lightly with salt, toss, and gently rub it with your hands. Leave it for 5–7 minutes – the cabbage will soften a little.

In a large bowl, combine grated beetroot, carrot, bell pepper, apple, and daikon radish.

Add sliced cabbage and red onion to the mix. Sprinkle with chopped dill and salt.

In a small bowl, whisk together sunflower oil, garlic, and honey (or sweetener).

Pour the dressing over the salad and toss well to combine.

Let the salad rest for 10–15 minutes before serving to allow flavors to blend.

Serve fresh. This salad is best the same day.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 110 kcal	Proteins 1.5g	Carbohydrates 14g	Fats 5.3g
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Carrot & Horseradish Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 0 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 medium carrots, peeled, grated
 1 small celery root, peeled, grated
 1 small kohlrabi, peeled, grated
 1 tablespoon freshly grated horseradish (or 1½ teaspoon prepared horseradish)
 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 1 tablespoon sunflower oil
 A pinch of salt (to taste)
 Sugar-free sweetener
 Fresh parsley for garnish

DIRECTIONS

Wash, peel, and grate the carrots, celery root and kohlrabi using a medium grater.

If using fresh horseradish root, peel and finely grate it.

In a mixing bowl, combine grated carrots and horseradish.

Add lemon juice, sunflower oil, salt, and sweetener (if using).

Mix everything thoroughly until evenly combined.

Let the salad sit for 5–10 minutes for flavors to blend.

Serve chilled or at room temperature, optionally garnished with chopped parsley.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 68 kcal	Proteins 1g	Carbohydrates 8g	Fats 4g
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Chapter 4. Grains & Pasta

Pasta or cooked cereal grains combine well and taste great when added to salads, bean dishes, meat, or fish meals. They are high in vitamins and fiber and offer a sustained sense of fullness. However, because they are heavy in carbohydrates, individuals with diabetes need to choose their pasta and cereals carefully. Considering how wholesome and nutrient-dense they are, they shouldn't be left off the table.

When choosing cereals, you should be guided by the rule that the longer the cereal is cooked, the slower it is absorbed by the body, and therefore does not lead to sudden spikes in blood sugar. As a rule, dark-colored cereals such as buckwheat, brown unpolished rice, whole wheat, oatmeal, and quinoa are a great choice for people with diabetes. These cereals, of course, are not as convenient as instant oatmeal or instant noodles, but they are definitely much healthier for the human body.

Let's compare unpolished brown rice and white rice. Before white rice is marketed, it goes through a number of processing steps that cause its nutritious but rather tough outer layer to peel off, leaving only the white core behind. This is done to enhance the flavor, improve the appearance, and expedite the cooking process. Additionally, processed rice may be stored better because it is less prone to pest infestation. Furthermore, rice may occasionally be steam-cooked to get a crumbly texture. While processed rice generally has numerous benefits, it also has a major drawback in that it is nearly entirely devoid of nutrients. Moreover, the body absorbs it far more quickly, which may cause abrupt rises in blood sugar.

Instead of just pouring boiling water over noodles, try cooking durum wheat pasta. This takes around 25-35 minutes, making it a healthier option.

It's advisable to cook enough pasta or grains for two days and store it in the refrigerator. Modern multicookers are quite handy for making grains; some even have a dedicated mode for this purpose. All of the nutrients are preserved throughout cooking since the multicooker keeps the food at the ideal temperature. This amazing helper cooks the grain and then puts it in the "Reheat" mode so it can brew properly and stay warm and fragrant until lunchtime.

Tip: Cereal grains can be consumed salty or sweet, hot or warm. The main thing for diabetics to keep in mind when having grains is that it's best to consume it with low-GI fruits, nuts, meat, fish, or vegetables instead of eating it as a stand-alone meal. This will lower the meal's total carbohydrate content.

Steel-Cut Oat in Multicooker

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 35 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup steel-cut oats
4 cups water
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon (optional)
1/2 cup milk or almond milk (optional)
Fresh berries or nuts (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Add the steel-cut oats, water, and salt to the multicooker. Stir to combine. Select the "Porridge" or "Multigrain" setting on your multicooker, and set the timer for 25 minutes. If using, add the cinnamon for extra flavor. Close the lid and start the multicooker. Once the cooking cycle is complete, carefully release the pressure if your multicooker has a pressure release valve. Stir in the milk or almond milk if desired, for added creaminess. Serve hot, topped with fresh berries, nuts, flaxseeds, vegetables or other fiber-rich low-GI toppings.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 150 kcal	Proteins 5g	Carbohydrates 27g	Fats 3g
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Buckwheat with Mushrooms

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 30 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup buckwheat groats (light brown, gently roasted)
 2 cups water
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 small onion, finely chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 cup mushrooms, sliced
 1 carrot, diced
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
 Fresh parsley for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Rinsed buckwheat groats with cold water. Heat the water in a medium saucepan until it boils. Add the buckwheat groats, reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for about 15 minutes or until the water is absorbed and the buckwheat is tender. Take it off the heat and leave it covered for five minutes.

While the buckwheat is cooking, heat the olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and cook for 2-3 minutes until softened.

Add the minced garlic, the diced carrot and sliced mushrooms to the skillet. Cook for another 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the mushrooms are tender and browned.

Season the vegetables with salt, black pepper, and dried thyme.

Add the cooked buckwheat to the skillet and toss to combine with the vegetables. Cook for an additional 2-3 minutes until heated through. Serve the buckwheat garnished with fresh parsley.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 210 kcal	Proteins 6g	Carbohydrates 33g	Fats 7g
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Boiled Buckwheat

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 25 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup buckwheat groats (light brown, gently roasted)
 3 cups water
 1 tablespoon butter
 Salt, pepper by taste

DIRECTIONS

Rinse the buckwheat groats under cold water.

In a medium saucepan, bring the water to a boil. Add the buckwheat groats, reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for about 15-20 minutes or until the water is absorbed and the buckwheat is tender.

Remove from heat, add one tablespoon of butter, gently mix and let stand covered for five minutes.

Buckwheat goes well hot or warm as a side for meat, mushrooms, or salads. Enjoy this super healthy and nutrition grain!

Per 1 serving:	Energy 180 kcal	Proteins 6g	Carbohydrates 32g	Fats 6g
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Tips for selecting buckwheat groats. Buckwheat groats come in two varieties: roasted and raw. Typically, light green in color, raw buckwheat is healthier to eat since it retains a maximum of useful vitamins and nutrients. It's perfect for adding to soups and sprouts. Roasted groats are brown in color. The more roasted it is, the darker the color. This type of buckwheat porridge is crumbly and quite tasty when cooked, although it has less nutritious value than raw cereal. If you prefer roasted buckwheat, choose light brown buckwheat grains: in this case, the heat treatment is minimal, which makes the buckwheat side dish tasty and flavorful, as well as healthy and nutritious.

Barley Risotto

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 60 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup pearl barley (rinsed, soaked for 3-4 hours or overnight)
 1 tbsp olive oil
 1 small onion, finely chopped
 1 garlic clove, minced
 1 cup mushrooms, chopped
 3 cups low-sodium vegetable or chicken broth (warm)
 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Fresh parsley, chopped (for garnish)

DIRECTIONS

Sauté aromatics: In a large saucepan, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add onion and garlic, cook for 2–3 minutes until softened.
Add vegetables: Stir in carrot, zucchini, and mushrooms. Sauté for another 5 minutes.
Toast the barley: Add the rinsed barley and stir for 1–2 minutes to lightly toast it.
Cook like risotto: Gradually add the warm broth one ladle at a time, stirring frequently. Let the liquid absorb before adding the next portion. Continue until barley is tender (25–30 minutes).
Finish and season: Stir in Parmesan cheese if using, season with salt and pepper. Let it sit for 2 minutes.
Serve: Spoon into bowls and garnish with fresh parsley.!

Per 1 serving:	Energy 260 kcal	Proteins 13g	Carbohydrates 39g	Fats 8g
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Pasta with Vegetables

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

8 oz whole wheat pasta
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 small onion, finely chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 red bell pepper, diced
 1 zucchini, sliced
 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
 1 cup broccoli florets
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)
 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
 Fresh basil or parsley for garnish

DIRECTIONS

Follow the directions on the package to cook the whole wheat pasta. After draining, set away.
 In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and cook for 2-3 minutes until softened.
 Once aromatic, add the minced garlic and simmer for an additional minute.
 To the skillet, add the broccoli florets, cherry tomatoes, zucchini, and red bell pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the veggies are soft, 8-10 minutes.
 Add salt, black pepper, dried oregano, and red pepper flakes (if using) to the vegetables to season them.
 Toss the cooked pasta with the vegetables in the skillet after adding it. Cook for a further two to three minutes, or until well heated.
 Garnish the pasta with freshly chopped parsley or basil and grated Parmesan cheese.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 250 kcal	Proteins 8g	Carbohydrates 38g	Fats 8g
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Boiled Steel-Cut Oat

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 35 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup steel-cut oats
4 cups water
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon (optional)
1/2 cup milk or almond milk (optional)
Fresh berries or nuts (optional)

DIRECTIONS

In a medium saucepan, bring the water to a boil. Add the salt. Stir in the steel-cut oats and reduce the heat to a simmer.
Cook, stirring occasionally, for about 25-30 minutes until the oats are tender and the grain has thickened.
If using, stir in the cinnamon and milk or almond milk for added creaminess.
Remove from heat and let sit for a few minutes before serving.
Serve hot, topped with fresh berries or nuts if desired.
Enjoy your nutritious and hearty steel-cut oat!
Serve your oat immediately or store it in the refrigerator for up to two days.

Per 1 serving:

Energy 150 kcal

Proteins 5g

Carbohydrates 27g

Fats 3g

Millet in Multicooker

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 30 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup millet
3 cups water
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
Salt by taste

DIRECTIONS

Rinse the millet under cold water to remove any impurities.
Add the rinsed millet, water, salt to the multicooker. Close the lid of the multicooker and set it to the "Porridge" or "Grains" setting, which typically takes around 25-30 minutes.
If your multicooker doesn't have such setting, you may manually set it to cook for 25 minutes on high pressure.
Let the millet cook until the multicooker signals that it is done.
Add one tablespoon of butter and mix gently. Let it stand covered for five minutes.
Enjoy your nutritious millet hot or warm as a side dish with vegetable salad or meat meal.
Serve millet right away or store it in the refrigerator for up to two days.

Per 1 serving:

Energy 180 kcal

Proteins 5g

Carbohydrates 30g

Fats 5g

Tip: If you cook cereals in a regular saucepan, remember that some cereals (millet, oatmeal, barley) should be cooked without a lid. This will help the porridge not to boil over during cooking. However, this isn't true for slow cookers or multicookers, which always cook cereal with the lid closed.

Boiled Brown Rice

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 50 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup brown rice
2 1/2 cups water
1 tablespoon butter
Salt by taste

DIRECTIONS

Rinse the brown rice under cold water.
In a medium saucepan, bring the water and salt to a boil over high heat.
Add the brown rice, reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for about 40 minutes or until the water is absorbed and the rice is tender.
Remove from heat, add one tablespoon of butter, gently mix and let the rice sit, covered, for 5 minutes to steam. Fluff the rice with a fork before serving.
Enjoy your nutritious and fiber-rich brown rice!

Per 1 serving:	Energy 170 kcal	Proteins 3.5g	Carbohydrates 36g	Fats 1.5g
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Chickpea Pasta with Pesto

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

8 oz chickpea pasta
1/4 cup pesto (store-bought or homemade)
1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese (optional)
1 tablespoon olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste
Fresh basil for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Cook the chickpea pasta according to package instructions. Drain and set aside.
In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the cherry tomatoes and cook for 2-3 minutes until they begin to soften.
Add the cooked pasta to the skillet and toss to combine with the tomatoes.
Stir in the pesto and cook for another 2-3 minutes until the pasta is well coated and heated through.
If using, sprinkle with grated Parmesan cheese and season with salt and pepper to taste.
Garnish with fresh basil if desired. Serve immediately with meat or light vegetable salad.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 310 kcal	Proteins 18g	Carbohydrates 40g	Fats 9g
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Quinoa in Multicooker

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup quinoa
2 cups water or low-sodium vegetable broth
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon olive oil (optional)
Fresh herbs for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Rinse the quinoa under cold water to remove the bitter coating.
Add the rinsed quinoa, water or vegetable broth, and salt to the multicooker. Stir to combine.
Close the lid of the multicooker and set it to the "Rice" or "Grain" setting, or manually set it to cook on high pressure for 10-15 minutes.
Once the cooking cycle is complete, let the pressure release naturally for about 5 minutes, then manually release any remaining pressure.
Fluff the quinoa with a fork. If desired, stir in the olive oil for added flavor.
Garnish with fresh herbs if desired and serve hot.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 150 kcal	Proteins 5g	Carbohydrates 27g	Fats 4g
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Barley in Slow Cooker

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 5 HOURS

INGREDIENTS

1 cup pearl barley
4 cups water or low-sodium vegetable broth
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon butter or olive oil (optional)
Fresh herbs for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Rinse the barley under cold water to remove any dust or debris.
Add the rinsed barley, water or vegetable broth, and salt to the slow cooker.
Stir to combine.
Cover and cook on low for about 5 hours, or until the barley is tender and most of the liquid is absorbed.
If desired, stir in the butter or olive oil for added flavor.
Garnish with fresh herbs if desired and serve.
Serve as a side dish or a base for various healthy toppings.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 170 kcal	Proteins 5g	Carbohydrates 36g	Fats 1g
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Tip: You may use the above multicooker and slow cooker recipes to make any delicious and healthy grain by following the specified proportions of cereal and water. You can cook your favorite grain in the healthiest way possible and save time with a multicooker or slow cooker. Although cooking in these kitchen appliances takes longer, you don't have to be there – the multicooker or slow cooker will take care of everything. To enjoy nutritious and fresh porridge in the morning, some housewives even let it to cook overnight.

Brown Rice with Vegetables

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 50 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup brown rice
 2 1/2 cups water
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 small onion, finely chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 red bell pepper, diced
 1 zucchini, diced
 1 cup broccoli florets
 1 carrot, diced
 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
 Fresh parsley for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Rinse the brown rice to get rid of extra starch. Bring the water and salt in a medium saucepan, boil over high heat. Add the brown rice, reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for about 40 minutes or until the water is absorbed and the rice is tender.

While the rice is cooking, heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and cook for 2-3 minutes until softened.

To the skillet, add the chopped garlic, red bell pepper, zucchini, broccoli florets, and carrot. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the veggies are soft, 8-10 minutes. Add black pepper and dried thyme to the veggies.

Add the cooked brown rice to the skillet and toss to combine with the vegetables. Cook for a further two to three minutes, or until well heated.

Serve the brown rice with vegetables garnished with fresh parsley if desired.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 120 kcal	Proteins 5g	Carbohydrates 28g	Fats 4g
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Pasta with Guacamole

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

200 g (7 oz) whole-grain or legume-based pasta (e.g., chickpea or lentil pasta)
 2 ripe avocados
 1 medium tomato, diced
 1/4 red onion, finely chopped
 1 garlic clove, minced
 1 tablespoon lemon or lime juice
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 Fresh cilantro (optional)
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Pinch of chili flakes, cumin (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Cook the pasta in lightly salted water according to package instructions. It's better to cook the pasta al dente. Drain and let cool slightly.

Prepare the guacamole. In a bowl, mash the avocados, add tomato, red onion, garlic, lemon/lime juice, olive oil, salt, pepper, and herbs/spices to taste. Mix well.

Top the pasta with guacamole while still slightly warm or cooled. Serve immediately as a warm or chilled dish.

Garnish with extra herbs or a sprinkle of pumpkin seeds for crunch if desired.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 310 kcal	Proteins 9g	Carbohydrates 32g	Fats 18g
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Chapter 5. Meat Meals

Today, there is a lot of discussion about the benefits and necessity of eating meat. It's possible that there isn't a single piece of universal guidance in this regard; rather, each person must decide for themselves depending on their personal health and well-being. After consuming meat, some people experience unpleasant symptoms like fatigue and stomach heaviness. However, some people lament the decline in their general health when following a meatless diet. It is hard for them to imagine their life without meat.

For diabetics, there are no health risks associated with consuming meat. Conversely, meat-based dishes should be a regular part of your diet, according to diabetologists. Their main points of contention are that meat products have a high nutritional value, a low carbohydrate content, or even none at all, and a high concentration of vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients. As a result, meat dishes are safe to include in a diabetic's daily diet. However, it's important to keep in mind that they should still be eaten in moderation and always be served with nutritious side dishes, light salads, and fresh vegetables.

Meatballs & Veggie One Pot

SERVINGS: 8

PREP TIME: 20 MIN

COOK TIME: 45 MIN

FOR THE MEATBALLS:

700 g (25 oz) lean ground beef or chicken
 1 small onion, finely chopped
 1 clove garlic, minced
 1 egg
 1/2 teaspoon salt and pepper

FOR THE VEGGIES:

1 small onion, finely chopped
 1 clove garlic, minced
 1 red bell pepper, sliced
 2 medium eggplants, diced
 4 tomatoes, crushed
 1 teaspoon tomato paste
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1/2 cup water or broth
 1 small fresh chili pepper (optional), finely chopped
 1 bay leaf
 Fresh herbs for garnish
 Salt, pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Prepare the meatballs: In a bowl, mix ground meat, onion, garlic, egg, parsley, salt, and pepper. Form small meatballs (about 1 inch in diameter). Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a non-stick skillet over medium heat. Add meatballs and lightly brown on all sides for 5–7 minutes. Remove and set aside.

In another big pot, heat 1 tablespoon olive oil, add onion, garlic, bell pepper, and eggplants. Sauté for 5 minutes. Add crushed tomatoes, tomato paste, chili pepper, a bay leaf, salt, and pepper. Mix vegetables well, pour in water or broth, and bring the sauce to a boil. Add the meatballs into the pot and dip them into the sauce. Cover and simmer for 25–30 minutes until the meatballs are cooked through and vegetables are tender.

Discard a bay leaf, garnish with fresh herbs, and serve warm.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 280 kcal	Proteins 24g	Carbohydrates 14g	Fats 14g
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Chicken Stewed in Cream Sauce

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 30 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 lb (450 g) boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into chunks
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 small onion, finely chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 cup low-sodium chicken broth
 1/2 cup heavy cream
 1/2 cup plain Greek yogurt
 1 teaspoon dried thyme
 1 teaspoon dried rosemary
 Salt and pepper to taste
 2 cups spinach, roughly chopped

DIRECTIONS

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the chicken chunks and cook until browned on all sides, about 5-7 minutes.

Remove the chicken from the skillet and set aside. Add the chopped onion and garlic to the same skillet and sauté for 3-4 minutes, or until softened.

Pour in the chicken broth and bring to a simmer. Reduce the heat to medium-low and stir in the heavy cream, Greek yogurt, thyme, rosemary, salt, and pepper.

Return the chicken to the skillet and stir to combine. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes, or until the chicken is cooked through and tender.

Add the chopped spinach to the skillet and cook for an additional 2-3 minutes.

Serve the chicken and cream sauce warm, garnished with additional herbs if desired.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 320 kcal	Proteins 30g	Carbohydrates 6g	Fats 20g
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Grilled Chicken Breast

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 30 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 2 tablespoons lemon juice
 1 teaspoon dried oregano
 1 teaspoon dried thyme
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a small bowl, combine the olive oil, lemon juice, oregano, thyme, salt, and pepper.

Put the chicken breasts in a shallow dish or a plastic bag that can be sealed. Pour the marinade over the chicken, making sure each piece is well coated. Cover the dish or seal the bag, then keep it in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes.

Preheat the grill to medium-high heat. Remove the chicken from the marinade and discard any remaining marinade.

Grill the chicken breasts for 6-7 minutes on each side, or until well cooked.

Remove the chicken from the grill and let it rest.

Serve the grilled chicken breasts with diabetes-friendly sides (e.g., green salad or vegetables).

Per 1 serving:	Energy 300 kcal	Proteins 28g	Carbohydrates 8g	Fats 18g
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Turkey Meatballs

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 lb (450 g) ground turkey
 1/4 cup whole wheat flour
 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
 1 large egg
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped
 1 teaspoon dried oregano
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
 1 tablespoon olive oil

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

In a large bowl, combine the ground turkey, almond flour, Parmesan cheese, egg, minced garlic, chopped parsley, dried oregano, salt, and black pepper. Mix until well combined.

Form the mixture into 16 meatballs.

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the meatballs and cook, turning occasionally, until browned on all sides, about 5-7 minutes.

Transfer the browned meatballs to the prepared baking sheet and bake in the oven for 12 minutes.

Remove the meatballs from the oven, let them rest.

Serve the turkey meatballs with a side of whole cooked grains or a fresh salad for a balanced meal.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 220 kcal	Proteins 26g	Carbohydrates 5g	Fats 12g
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Chicken Stir-Fry

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 lb (450 g) boneless, skinless chicken breasts, thinly sliced
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 cup broccoli florets
 1 cup bell peppers, sliced (any color)
 1 cup snap peas
 1 medium carrot, julienned
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 tablespoon fresh ginger, grated
 3 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
 1 tablespoon sesame oil

DIRECTIONS

Slice the chicken breasts and cut the vegetables.

In a large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the sliced chicken and roast until cooked through, about 5-7 minutes. Remove the chicken from the skillet and set aside.

In the same skillet, add the 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Add the broccoli, bell peppers, snap peas, and carrots. Stir-fry for about 5-7 minutes, until the vegetables are tender-crisp.

Add the minced garlic and grated ginger to the skillet, stirring for about 1 minute until fragrant.

Put the chicken back in the skillet after it is done. Blend the rice vinegar, sesame oil, and soy sauce in a small bowl and stir. Pour over the chicken and vegetables. Toss to mix.

Serve the chicken stir-fry immediately, optionally garnished with sesame seeds or green onions.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 250 kcal	Proteins 27g	Carbohydrates 10g	Fats 12g
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Pork Tenderloin

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 25 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 lb (450 g) pork tenderloin
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 teaspoon dried rosemary
 1 teaspoon dried thyme
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
 1/4 cup low-sodium chicken broth
 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C).
 Season the pork tenderloin with salt, pepper, rosemary, and thyme.
 Heat olive oil in an oven-safe skillet over medium-high heat. Add the pork tenderloin and sear on all sides until browned, about 3-4 minutes per side.
 Add minced garlic to the skillet and cook for about 1 minute until fragrant.
 In a small bowl, combine the chicken broth and Dijon mustard. Pour over the pork tenderloin in the skillet.
 Transfer the skillet to the preheated oven and roast for 20-25 minutes (or until the internal temperature reaches 145°F or 63°C).
 Before slicing, take the pork tenderloin out of the oven and allow it to rest for 5 minutes. Serve with the mustard sauce.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 220 kcal	Proteins 28g	Carbohydrates 1g	Fats 11g
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Chicken Thighs with Mustard Sauce

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 30 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 lb (450 g) boneless, skinless chicken thighs
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 Salt and pepper to taste
 1/2 cup low-sodium chicken broth
 1/4 cup Dijon mustard
 1/4 cup plain Greek yogurt
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 teaspoon dried thyme
 1 teaspoon dried rosemary
 Fresh herbs for garnishing (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Season the chicken thighs with salt and pepper. In a large skillet, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the chicken thighs and cook until browned on both sides, about 4-5 minutes per side. Remove the chicken from the skillet and set aside.
 In the same skillet, add the minced garlic and sauté for about 1 minute. Add the chicken broth, Dijon mustard, Greek yogurt, thyme, and rosemary to the skillet. Stir to combine and bring to a simmer.
 Return the browned chicken thighs to the skillet, coating them with the sauce.
 Reduce the heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer for 20 min, or until the chicken is tender.
 Taste the sauce and adjust seasoning with additional salt and pepper if needed.
 Serve the chicken thighs hot with mustard sauce, and garnished with fresh herbs if desired.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 250 kcal	Proteins 27g	Carbohydrates 10g	Fats 12g
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Easy Chicken Thighs

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 50 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 lb (450 g) boneless, skinless chicken thighs
 2 cups water or vegetable broth
 1 small carrot, peeled
 1 small onion, peeled
 2 teaspoon dried dill
 1 bay leaf
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a medium size pot, add water or vegetable broth and bring it to a boil. Add the chicken thighs, the small carrot, and the small onion and boil over medium-low heat about 40 minutes.
 Taste and adjust the broth with additional salt and pepper if needed. Add the bay leaf, dried dill, and boil 10 minutes more. Pick up the bay leaf, turn off the heat and let it rest for 10 minutes.
 Serve the chicken thighs hot or cold with grain side or a veggie salad.
 Chicken broth may also be stored in the refrigerator or frozen for future use.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 280 kcal	Proteins 26g	Carbohydrates 14g	Fats 12g
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Beef and Vegetable Kebab

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 20 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 lb (450 g) lean beef (e.g., sirloin), cut into 1-in cubes
 1 red bell pepper, cut into 1-in pieces
 1 yellow bell pepper, cut into 1-in pieces
 1 zucchini, sliced into 1/2-inch rounds
 1 red onion, cut into 1-inch pieces
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 teaspoon dried oregano
 1 teaspoon dried thyme
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Skewers (wooden or metal)

DIRECTIONS

In a large bowl, blend olive oil, soy sauce, balsamic vinegar, minced garlic, oregano, thyme, salt, and pepper. Add the beef cubes to bowl and toss to coat evenly. Marinate in the refrigerator for at least 15 minutes.
 While the beef is marinating, prepare the vegetables by cutting them into pieces and setting them aside.
 Thread the beef, bell peppers, zucchini, and red onion onto the skewers, alternating between meat and vegetables.
 Preheat the grill to medium-high heat.
 After placing the kebabs on the grill, cook them for 10-15 minutes, rotating them now and again, until the vegetables are soft and the beef reaches your preferred doneness.
 Remove the kebabs from the grill and let them rest for a few minutes before serving.
 Serve the beef and vegetable kebabs with a side salad or a healthy grain like quinoa.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 160 kcal	Proteins 16g	Carbohydrates 5g	Fats 9g
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Garlic Herb Chicken Drumsticks

SERVINGS: 4	PREP TIME: 10 MIN	COOK TIME: 35 MIN
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INGREDIENTS

- 8 chicken drumsticks
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon dried rosemary
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 lemon, sliced (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Mix together the olive oil, minced garlic, rosemary, thyme, oregano, paprika, salt, pepper in a big dish.

Add the chicken drumsticks to the bowl and toss to coat them evenly with the marinade. Let sit for 10 minutes if time allows. Place the marinated drumsticks on the prepared baking sheet. Arrange lemon slices around the drumsticks if using.

Bake in the preheated oven for 30-35 minutes, or until the chicken is cooked through and the skin is crispy. To allow the juices to redistribute, let the drumsticks rest for a few minutes before serving. Serve the chicken drumsticks with a side of steamed vegetables or a fresh salad.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 280 kcal	Proteins 26g	Carbohydrates 14g	Fats 12g
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Beef Stewed with Vegetables

SERVINGS: 4	PREP TIME: 15 MIN	COOK TIME: 90 MIN
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INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb (450 g) lean beef stew meat, cut into chunks
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups low-sodium beef broth
- 1 cup water
- 2 medium carrots, sliced
- 2 celery stalks, sliced
- 1 cup green beans, trimmed and halved
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon dried rosemary
- 1 bay leaf
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Fresh parsley for garnish

DIRECTIONS

In a large pot or Dutch oven, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the beef stew meat and brown on all sides, about 5-7 minutes.

Add the chopped onion and minced garlic to the pot. Sauté for about 2-3 minutes until the onion is translucent.

Pour in the beef broth and water, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the pot.

Add the carrots, celery, green beans, thyme, rosemary, bay leaf, salt, and pepper to the pot. Stir to combine.

Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce the heat to low. Cover and simmer for 75-90 minutes, or until the beef is tender and the vegetables are cooked through.

Taste and adjust the seasoning with additional salt and pepper if needed. Remove the bay leaf before serving.

Serve the beef stew hot with vegetable salad, optionally garnished with fresh parsley.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 280 kcal	Proteins 26g	Carbohydrates 14g	Fats 12g
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Turkey Chili

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 30 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 lb (450 g) ground turkey
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 medium onion, chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 red bell pepper, chopped
 1 yellow bell pepper, chopped
 1 can (15 oz) kidney beans
 1 can (15 oz) black beans
 1 can (15 oz) diced tomatoes; not salted
 1 cup low-sodium chicken broth
 2 tablespoons chili powder
 1 teaspoon ground cumin
 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a large pot or Dutch oven, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the ground turkey and cook until browned, about 5-7 minutes, breaking it up with a spoon.

Add the chopped onion, garlic, red bell pepper, and yellow bell pepper to the pot. Cook for about 5 minutes, until the vegetables are softened.

Stir in the chili powder, ground cumin, smoked paprika, oregano, salt, and pepper. Cook for 1-2 minutes until fragrant.

To the pot, add the black beans, kidney beans, diced tomatoes, and chicken broth. Mix everything together.

Bring the chili to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and simmer for 20-25 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Taste and adjust the seasoning with additional salt and pepper if needed.

Serve the turkey chili hot, garnished with optional toppings like chopped green onions, fresh cilantro, or a dollop of Greek yogurt.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 280 kcal	Proteins 28g	Carbohydrates 30g	Fats 7g
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Easy Lamb in Slow Cooker

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 6 HOURS

INGREDIENTS

1 lb (450 g) lamb shoulder, cut into bite-sized pieces
 1 large onion, chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 2 teaspoon dried rosemary
 1 teaspoon cumin
 1 teaspoon thyme
 1 bay leaf
 1 cup low-sodium beef broth or water
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Chop the onion and garlic. Cut the lamb shoulder into bite-sized pieces.

Place the lamb, onion, garlic, beef broth or water into the slow cooker. Add the dried rosemary, thyme, cumin, bay leaf, salt, pepper. Stir well to combine.

Cover the slow cooker with the lid and set it to cook on low for 6 hours, or until the lamb is tender.

About 30 minutes before serving, taste the stew and adjust seasoning if necessary. Remove the bay leaf before serving.

Serve lamb hot with steamed or fresh vegetables for balanced meal.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 320 kcal	Proteins 28g	Carbohydrates 12g	Fats 18g
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Beef Lettuce Wraps

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 lb (450 g) lean ground beef
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 small onion, finely chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 red bell pepper, finely chopped
 1/4 cup low-sodium soy sauce
 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
 1/2 teaspoon sesame oil
 1 head of iceberg lettuce, leaves separated
 2 green onions, chopped
 1 tablespoon sesame seeds (optional)
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the chopped onion and cook for 2-3 minutes until softened.
 In the skillet, add the ground beef and cook for 5-7 minutes, or until browned. As the meat cooks, break it up with a spoon.
 Stir in the minced garlic, red bell pepper, soy sauce, rice vinegar, grated ginger, sesame oil, salt, and pepper. Cook for an additional 3-5 minutes until the vegetables are tender.
 Separate the lettuce leaves and wash them thoroughly. Using paper towels, pat them dry. Spoon the beef mixture into the center of each lettuce leaf. Top with chopped green onions and sesame seeds, if desired.
 Serve the lettuce wraps immediately and enjoy!

Per 1 serving:	Energy 280 kcal	Proteins 26g	Carbohydrates 14g	Fats 12g
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Beef Steak with Asparagus

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 beef steaks (about 6 oz each)
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 teaspoon dried rosemary
 1 teaspoon dried thyme
 Salt and pepper to taste
 1 lb asparagus, trimmed
 1 tablespoon lemon juice

DIRECTIONS

Season the steaks with salt, pepper, rosemary, thyme, and minced garlic on both sides. Let them sit for about 10 minutes to absorb the flavors.
 In a large skillet, heat 1/2 tablespoon of olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the asparagus and sauté for about 7-5 minutes, until tender but still crisp. Sprinkle with lemon juice, salt, and pepper. Remove the asparagus from the skillet, set aside.
 In the same skillet, add 1/2 tablespoon of olive oil. Increase the heat to high and add the steaks. Cook for 3-4 minutes on each side for medium-rare, or adjust the time of roasting due to your preferred doneness.
 Remove the steaks from the skillet and let them rest for 5 min.
 Serve the beef steaks with the sautéed asparagus & fresh herbs.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 350 kcal	Proteins 30g	Carbohydrates 6g	Fats 24g
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Bulgur with Chicken

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 25 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 lb (450 g) boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into bite-sized pieces
 1 cup bulgur wheat
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 small onion, finely chopped
 1 middle carrot, finely chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 red bell pepper, diced
 2 cups low-sodium chicken broth
 1 teaspoon dried thyme
 1 teaspoon ground cumin
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Fresh dill, chopped (for garnish)

DIRECTIONS

Rinse the bulgur under cold water and set aside.
 Heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil over medium-high heat in a big skillet. Add the chicken pieces and cook for 5-7 minutes, until they browned and cooked through. Remove the chicken pieces from the skillet and set aside.
 In the same skillet, add the remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Add the chopped onion, carrot, garlic, and red bell pepper. Sauté for 3-4 minutes.
 Add the rinsed bulgur, dried thyme, ground cumin, salt, and pepper to the skillet with the vegetables. Stir to combine. Pour in the chicken broth and bring to a boil.
 Reduce the heat to low, cover the skillet, and let it simmer for 15-20 minutes, or until the bulgur is tender and has absorbed most of the liquid.
 Return the cooked chicken to the skillet, stirring to combine. Cook for an additional 2-3 minutes to heat through.
 Serve bulgur with chicken not, garnishing with chopped fresh dill.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 350 kcal	Proteins 30g	Carbohydrates 38g	Fats 9g
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Chicken Soup

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 55 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 lb boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into 4 big pieces
 4 cups water
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 medium onion, chopped
 2 medium carrots, sliced
 1 medium zucchini, diced
 1 cup frozen or fresh green peas
 2 cups fresh spinach, chopped
 1 bay leaf
 Salt, pepper, dried oregano to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a large saucepan, add chicken breast and water. Over high heat, bring the water to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low, cover the saucepan and cook the chicken for 40 minutes.
 While chicken is cooking, heat the olive oil over medium heat in a small skillet. Add the chopped onion and carrots. Sauté for about 5 minutes until the vegetables begin to soften. Turn off the heat and set the skillet aside.
 Add zucchini, green peas, a bay leaf, and oregano to the large saucepan. Bring the soup to a boil, simmer for 10 minutes until the vegetables are tender.
 Stir in the chopped spinach, cooked onion and carrot from the skillet. Season the soup with salt, pepper. Cook for another 3-5 minutes. Remove the bay leaf and turn off the heat.
 Serve the soup hot.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 200 kcal	Proteins 24g	Carbohydrates 12g	Fats 6g
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Buckwheat Soup with Meatballs

SERVINGS: 4	PREP TIME: 15 MIN	COOK TIME: 30 MIN
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INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 lb (225 g) lean ground beef or turkey
- 1/2 cup buckwheat groats, rinsed (light brown or raw green)
- 1 medium carrot, diced
- 1 small onion, diced
- 1 red bell pepper, sliced
- 1 medium potato, diced
- 6 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 bay leaf
- Fresh parsley, chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a medium bowl, mix well the ground meat, one tablespoon of parsley, a pinch of salt, and pepper. Form small meatballs, about 1 inch in diameter. Set aside.

Heat the olive oil over medium heat in a big pot. Add the diced onion and carrot, and sauté for about 5 minutes until softened.

Pour in the broth and add the rinsed buckwheat groats, diced potato, and bay leaf. Bring the soup to a gentle boil.

Carefully add the meatballs and sliced bell pepper to the boiling soup. Reduce the heat to low and let the soup simmer for about 20 minutes, or until the meatballs are cooked through and the buckwheat is tender.

Remove the bay leaf, taste the soup, and adjust seasoning with salt and pepper if necessary. Garnish with chopped fresh parsley.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 250 kcal	Proteins 18g	Carbohydrates 25g	Fats 8g
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Meat Broth

SERVINGS: 4	PREP TIME: 10 MIN	COOK TIME: 2 HOURS
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INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb (450 g) lean beef or chicken with bones (e.g., beef shank, chicken thighs)
- 8 cups water
- 1 medium onion, halved
- 1 medium carrot, chopped
- 2 celery stalks, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 bay leaves
- 5-7 whole black peppercorns
- Salt to taste
- Fresh parsley, chopped

DIRECTIONS

Rinse the meat under cold water to remove any blood. Peel and chop the vegetables.

In a large pot, combine the meat, water, onion, carrot, celery, garlic, bay leaves, and peppercorns. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Once boiling, reduce the heat to low and simmer the broth gently for about 2 hours. Skim off any foam or impurities that rise to the surface during cooking.

Season with salt to taste at the end of cooking. Once the broth has cooked, remove the vegetables and meat. Strain the broth through a fine mesh sieve into a clean container. Let the broth cool slightly. The broth can be enjoyed hot on its own with fresh parsley or used as a base for soups and stews.

If not using immediately, refrigerate for up to 3 days or freeze for longer storage.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 60 kcal	Proteins 6g	Carbohydrates 2g	Fats 3g
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Chicken Fajitas

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 lb (450 g) boneless, skinless chicken breasts, thinly sliced
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 red bell pepper, sliced
 1 green bell pepper, sliced
 1 yellow bell pepper, sliced
 1 medium onion, sliced
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 tablespoon fajita seasoning
 1 teaspoon ground cumin
 1 teaspoon paprika
 Salt and pepper to taste
 8 small whole-wheat tortillas
 1 lime, cut into wedges
 Fresh cilantro, chopped (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Sliced chicken, 1 tablespoon olive oil, minced garlic, fajita seasoning, ground cumin, paprika, salt, and pepper should all be combined in a big bowl. After thoroughly mixing, give it at least 15 minutes to marinate.

Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the marinated chicken and cook for about 5-7 minutes until the chicken is cooked through and no longer pink. Remove the chicken from the skillet and set aside.

In the same skillet, add the sliced bell peppers and onion. The veggies should be crisp-tender after roughly 5 minutes of simmering. Return the cooked chicken to the skillet with the vegetables. Stir to combine and cook for an additional 2-3 minutes to heat through.

Warm the whole-wheat tortillas in a separate skillet or microwave until pliable. Serve the chicken and vegetable mixture in the warm tortillas. Squeeze lime juice over the top and garnish with fresh cilantro if desired. Serve immediately with a side of guacamole, salsa, or Greek yogurt.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 280 kcal	Proteins 26g	Carbohydrates 14g	Fats 12g
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Quick & Yummy Chicken Nuggets

SERVINGS: 2

PREP TIME: 30 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 chicken breasts (18 oz, skinless, boneless)
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
 2 tablespoons lemon juice
 1 teaspoon corn starch
 4-5 tablespoon whole wheat flour
 5-6 tablespoon olive oil (for frying)

DIRECTIONS

Cut the chicken breasts into bite-sized pieces. In a large bowl, mix chicken pieces with lemon juice, corn starch, salt, and black pepper. Toss the chicken pieces gently to coat each one with a thin layer of corn starch, lemon juice and seasonings. Let the mixture remain in a cool area for 15-30 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 320°F (160°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Put whole wheat flour on a flat plate.

Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Dredge each chicken piece in the flour, ensuring an even coating on all sides. Cook chicken pieces for two to four minutes on each side over medium heat until golden brown. Transfer the nuggets to the prepared baking sheet and bake for 10 minutes.

Serve the nuggets with vegetables or your favourite sauce.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 300 kcal	Proteins 28g	Carbohydrates 8g	Fats 18g
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Chapter 6. Fish Meals and Seafood

Fish and seafood dishes are a great choice for a healthy lunch or a delicious dinner. They typically cook quickly and are simple to prepare. Due to their extremely low carbohydrate content, fish and seafood are safe for diabetics to consume. Eating seafood offers other advantages in addition to this.

Protein from seafood and fish is absorbed by the body more readily than protein from meat-based meals. Additionally, it helps to preserve muscular mass and lessens the strain on the digestive system.

Fish, especially fatty fish such as salmon, mackerel, sardines, and tuna, are a rich source of omega-3 fatty acids. These fats are regarded as healthy fats because they enhance cardiovascular health, lessen inflammation in the body, and may lower the risk of heart disease, a major diabetic consequence.

Since most fish and seafood are low in calories, they are a healthy option for anyone attempting to reduce weight or maintain a healthy weight—something that is particularly crucial for individuals who have type 2 diabetes.

Vital vitamins and minerals including iodine, vitamin D, B vitamins, and selenium can all be found in plenty in fish. In particular, vitamin D helps maintain the immune system and may lower the risk of complications from diabetes. Consuming fish lowers blood pressure, raises HDL (the "good" cholesterol), and lowers triglyceride levels. There are many different ways to cook fish and seafood, including baking, grilling, steaming, and preparing it into soups and salads. This enables you to make a wide variety of delicious recipes that can greatly expand your diabetic diet.

Hake Stewed with Vegetables

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

3 hake fillets (about 6 oz each)
3-4 potatoes, peeled, diced
(about 10 oz)
1 medium onion, diced
1 medium carrot, diced
1 red bell pepper, sliced
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 clove garlic, minced
2 tablespoons tomato paste
Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Dice the potatoes, onion, and carrot. Slice the bell pepper and mince the garlic.
The hake fillet should be cut into medium pieces.
In a large pot, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion, carrot, and bell pepper. Sauté for 5-7 minutes until softened.
Stir in the diced potatoes and tomato paste, cooking for another 2 minutes.
Place the hake fillets on top of the vegetables, season with salt and pepper, and add enough water to just cover the ingredients.
Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to low. Cover and simmer for 20-25 minutes until the potatoes are tender and the fish is cooked through.
Taste and adjust seasoning if needed.
Serve hot and garnish with fresh herbs if desired.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 220 kcal	Proteins 21g	Carbohydrates 19g	Fats 6g
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Salmon & Millet Soup

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 25 MIN

INGREDIENTS

8 oz (225g) salmon fillet, cut into bite-sized pieces
 1 big potato, peeled, diced
 1 medium carrot, diced
 1/2 medium celery root, diced
 3 tablespoons millet (uncooked), rinsed well
 2 green onions, chopped
 1 bay leaf
 1 teaspoon salt (adjust to taste)
 1.2 L (5 cups) water
 4 tablespoon low-fat sour cream (for serving)
 Fresh parsley (for garnish)

DIRECTIONS

In a pot, add water, millet, diced potatoes, carrot, celery, and bay leaf. Bring to a boil.
 Reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes until the millet starts to soften.
 Add diced salmon and salt. Simmer for another 10–12 minutes until the fish is cooked through.
 Stir in chopped green onion. Cook 1–2 more minutes.
 Turn off the heat, remove the bay leaf, and let the soup rest for a few minutes.
 Serve each portion with 1 tablespoon of sour cream and garnish with fresh parsley.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 240 kcal	Proteins 18g	Carbohydrates 17g	Fats 11g
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Baked Dorado over Vegetables

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 25 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 whole dorado fish (about 1 lb each), cleaned and scaled
 3 tablespoons olive oil
 1 small onion, peeled, diced
 1 small bell pepper, diced
 1 small carrot, peeled, diced
 1 lemon, thinly sliced
 4 cloves garlic, minced
 1 teaspoon dried oregano
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Fresh parsley (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C). Rinse the dorado fish under cold water and pat dry with paper towels. Make 2-3 diagonal slashes on each side of the fish. Prepare vegetables.
 In a small bowl, mix together olive oil, minced garlic, dried thyme, dried oregano, salt, and pepper. Rub this mixture inside the fish and on the outside, ensuring even coverage.
 Place a few lemon slices inside each fish, along with some fresh parsley.
 Distribute the onion, carrot, and bell pepper in a thin layer over the bottom of the baking dish or on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Place the fish on the vegetables. Arrange the remaining lemon slices on top of the fish. Bake for 30-35 minutes, or until the fish is cooked through.
 Remove the fish from the oven, and serve hot with a side of steamed vegetables or a mild salad.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 320 kcal	Proteins 28g	Carbohydrates 12g	Fats 18g
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Seaweed Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 5 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup dried seaweed (wakame or kelp), soaked in water for 10-15 minutes and drained
 1/2 medium celery root, peeled, grated
 1 small carrot, peeled, grated
 1-2 tablespoons sesame oil
 1 tablespoon rice vinegar (sugar-free)
 1 teaspoon low-sodium soy sauce
 1 teaspoon sesame seeds
 1 clove garlic, minced
 1 green onion, finely chopped
 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Soak the dried seaweed in a bowl of water for about 10-15 minutes, or until it softens. Drain and gently squeeze out any excess water. Chop into bite-sized pieces if necessary.
 In a small bowl, whisk together the sesame oil, rice vinegar, soy sauce, minced garlic, and red pepper flakes (if using).
 In a large bowl, toss the soaked seaweed, grated celery root and carrot with the prepared dressing. Mix well to ensure all the seaweed is evenly coated.
 Sprinkle the sesame seeds over the salad and toss again. Add chopped green onion on top for extra flavor and texture.
 For best flavor, refrigerate the seaweed salad for 10-15 minutes before serving to allow the flavors to meld together.
 Serve the seaweed salad as a side dish or light snack.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 80 kcal	Proteins 2g	Carbohydrates 5g	Fats 6g
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Garlic Shrimps Stir-Fry

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 lb (450 g) large shrimp, deveined
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 4 cloves garlic, minced
 1 red bell pepper, thinly sliced
 1 yellow bell pepper, thinly sliced
 1 cup snap peas
 1 tablespoon soy sauce
 1 tablespoon lemon juice or apple cider vinegar
 Salt and black pepper to taste
 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
 Fresh cilantro or parsley, chopped

DIRECTIONS

In a large skillet or wok, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the minced garlic to the skillet and sauté for about 30 seconds until fragrant. Add the shrimp and cook for 2-3 minutes until they turn pink and opaque. Remove the shrimp from the skillet and set aside.
 In the same skillet, add the sliced bell peppers and snap peas. Stir-fry for 3-4 minutes until the vegetables are tender-crisp.
 Return the shrimp to the skillet. Add the soy sauce, lemon juice, black pepper, and ground ginger (if using). Stir to combine all the ingredients and cook for an additional 2 minutes.
 Remove from heat, garnish with fresh cilantro or parsley, and serve immediately. You can enjoy it as is or with a side of brown rice.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 320 kcal	Proteins 28g	Carbohydrates 12g	Fats 18g
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Seared Tuna Steak

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 tuna steaks (about 6 oz each)
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 tablespoon soy sauce (low-sodium)
 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 1 tablespoon sesame oil
 1 tablespoon sesame seeds
 1 teaspoon black pepper
 1 teaspoon garlic powder
 Fresh cilantro, chopped (for garnish)

DIRECTIONS

In a small bowl, mix the olive oil, soy sauce, lemon juice, sesame oil, black pepper, and garlic powder.
 Place the tuna steaks in a shallow dish and pour the marinade over them, ensuring each steak is well coated. Let it marinate for at least 10 minutes.
 Heat a large skillet or grill pan over medium-high heat.
 Remove the tuna steaks from the marinade and sprinkle both sides with sesame seeds. Sear the tuna steaks for about 2-3 minutes on each side for medium-rare, or longer if you prefer them more well-done.
 Remove the steaks from the pan and let them rest for a minute or two to allow the juices to redistribute.
 Garnish with fresh cilantro. Serve hot with a side of steamed vegetables or a light green salad.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 300 kcal	Proteins 40g	Carbohydrates 1g	Fats 14g
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Broiled Halibut with Garlic Butter

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 halibut fillets (about 6 oz each)
 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 1 teaspoon dried parsley
 1/2 teaspoon paprika
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Lemon wedges (for serving)
 Fresh parsley, chopped (for garnish)

DIRECTIONS

Preheat your broiler to high and position the oven rack about 6 inches from the heat source.
 In a small bowl, combine the melted butter, minced garlic, lemon juice, dried parsley, paprika, salt, and pepper.
 Place the halibut fillets on a broiler pan or baking sheet lined with foil. Brush the garlic butter mixture evenly over the fillets.
 Broil the fillets for about 8-10 minutes, depending on the thickness of the fillets, or until the fish flakes easily with a fork and is opaque throughout.
 Remove the halibut from the oven and let it rest for a minute.
 Garnish with fresh parsley and serve with lemon wedges.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 320 kcal	Proteins 28g	Carbohydrates 12g	Fats 18g
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Coconut Carry Shrimp

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 lb (450 g) large shrimp, peeled, deveined
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 small onion, finely chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 tablespoon ginger, grated
 1 tablespoon curry powder
 1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
 1 can (14 oz) light coconut milk
 1 tablespoon lime juice
 1/2 cup diced tomatoes (optional)
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Fresh cilantro, chopped

DIRECTIONS

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and sauté for 2-3 minutes until softened. Add the minced garlic and grated ginger to the skillet and sauté for another minute until fragrant.
 Stir in the curry powder and turmeric, cooking for 1 minute to allow the spices to bloom.
 Pour in the coconut milk and diced tomatoes (if using), stirring to combine. Bring the mixture to a gentle simmer.
 Add the shrimp to the skillet and cook for 5-7 minutes, or until the shrimp turn pink and are cooked through. Stir in the lime juice and season with salt and pepper to taste.
 Garnish with chopped cilantro and serve immediately. This dish pairs well with a side of brown rice.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 260 kcal	Proteins 24g	Carbohydrates 1g	Fats 15g
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Easy Steamed Salmon

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 salmon fillets (about 6 oz each)
 1 lemon, thinly sliced
 1 tablespoon fresh dill, chopped
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Fresh parsley, chopped (for garnish)

DIRECTIONS

Set up your steamer by filling the bottom with water and bringing it to a simmer. If you don't have a steamer, you can use a large pot with a steaming basket.
 Drizzle olive oil over the salmon fillets and season them with salt, pepper, and fresh dill. Place lemon slices on top of each fillet.
 Place the salmon fillets in the steamer basket, ensuring they are not overlapping. Cover and steam for about 10-15 minutes, or until the salmon is cooked through. The salmon is ready when it flakes easily with a fork or it reaches an internal temperature of 145°F (63°C).
 Transfer the steamed salmon to a serving plate and garnish with fresh parsley.
 Serve the salmon hot with a side of steamed vegetables or a fresh salad.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 250 kcal	Proteins 25g	Carbohydrates 2g	Fats 16g
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Steamed Mussels with White Wine

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 lbs (900 g) fresh mussels, cleaned and debearded
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 4 cloves garlic, minced
 1 small shallot, finely chopped
 1 cup dry white wine
 1/2 cup low-sodium chicken broth
 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)
 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 Fresh parsley, chopped (for garnish)
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a large pot or Dutch oven, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the minced garlic and chopped shallot, and sauté for 2-3 minutes until fragrant and softened.
 Pour in the white wine, chicken broth, and red pepper flakes (if using). Bring the mixture to a simmer.
 Add the cleaned mussels to the pot. Cover with a lid and steam for 5-7 minutes, or until the mussels have opened. Discard any mussels that do not open.
 Once the mussels are cooked, stir in the lemon juice and season with salt and pepper to taste.
 Transfer the mussels to a serving dish, pouring the broth over them. Garnish with chopped parsley and serve immediately.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 220 kcal	Proteins 22g	Carbohydrates 5g	Fats 8g
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Easy Fried Cod

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 cod fillets (about 6 oz each)
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1/4 cup whole-grain wheat flour
 1/2 teaspoon paprika
 Salt and pepper to taste
 1 lemon, cut into wedges

DIRECTIONS

In a shallow dish, mix the whole-grain wheat flour, paprika, salt, and pepper.
 The hake fillet should be cut into medium pieces.
 Pat the cod fillets dry with paper towels. Dredge each fillet in the flour mixture, ensuring an even coating on all sides.
 In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat.
 Place the coated cod fillets in the hot skillet. Cook for 4-5 minutes on each side, or until the fish is golden brown and well cooked.
 Remove the cod from the skillet and let it rest for a minute.
 Serve with lemon wedges and a side of cooked whole grains.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 250 kcal	Proteins 30g	Carbohydrates 3g	Fats 12g
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Fish Cakes

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 lb cooked fish fillets (such as cod, salmon, or tuna; e.g., canned or steamed), flaked
 1/2 cup whole wheat flour
 1 large egg, beaten
 1 small onion, finely chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped
 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
 1 teaspoon lemon zest
 Salt and pepper to taste
 2 tablespoons olive oil (for frying)
 Lemon wedges (for serving)

DIRECTIONS

In a large bowl, combine the flaked fish, whole wheat flour, beaten egg, chopped onion, minced garlic, parsley, Dijon mustard, lemon zest, salt, and pepper. Blend well.
 Shape the mixture into 8 small patties (about 2 inches in diameter) or 4 larger patties, depending on your preference.
 Heat the olive oil over medium heat in a big pan.
 Place the fish cakes in the pan and cook for 4-5 minutes on each side, or until golden brown and crispy on the outside.
 Remove the fish cakes from the skillet and let them drain on a paper towel-lined plate to remove excess oil. Serve with lemon wedges and a side of greens or a light salad.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 220 kcal	Proteins 25g	Carbohydrates 5g	Fats 12g
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Baked Cod with Vegetables

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 cod fillets (about 6 oz each)
 4 tablespoons olive oil
 1 small onion, finely chopped
 1 big carrot, finely chopped
 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
 1 teaspoon paprika
 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
 1/4 teaspoon pepper
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1 lemon, cut into wedges

DIRECTIONS

Preheat your oven to 400°F (200°C) and line a baking dish with parchment.
 In a small bowl, mix together 2 tablespoons olive oil, garlic powder, lemon juice, paprika, salt, and pepper. Place cod fillets to the mixture, ensuring each steak is well coated. Let it marinate for 10 minutes.
 Heat the olive oil over medium-high in a large skillet. Add chopped onion and carrot to the skillet. Cook the vegetables for 7-8 minutes, or until they are browned well.
 Spread the vegetables on the parchment in a thin layer. Put cod fillets on the vegetables. Bake for 20 minutes.
 Replace the cod with vegetable from the dish to plates and let it rest for 5 minutes.
 Serve with lemon wedges and a whole-grain side dish.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 250 kcal	Proteins 30g	Carbohydrates 3g	Fats 12g
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Grilled Scallops with Lemon Butter

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 6 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 lb large sea scallops (about 16 scallops)
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 Salt and pepper to taste
 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 1 teaspoon lemon zest
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped

DIRECTIONS

Rinse the scallops under cold water and pat them dry with paper towels. Toss the scallops in olive oil, and season with salt and pepper.

Preheat your grill to medium-high heat. Place the scallops on the grill and cook for 2-3 minutes on each side, until they are opaque and slightly firm to the touch.

While the scallops are grilling, melt the butter in a small saucepan over medium heat. Add the minced garlic and cook for 1 minute until fragrant. Remove from heat and stir in the lemon juice, lemon zest, and chopped parsley.

Drizzle the lemon butter sauce over the grilled scallops and serve immediately.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 250 kcal	Proteins 20g	Carbohydrates 2g	Fats 18g
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Sardines in Olive Oil and Herbs

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

8 fresh sardines, cleaned and gutted
 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
 3 cloves garlic, minced
 1 tablespoon fresh rosemary, finely chopped
 1 tablespoon fresh thyme, finely chopped
 1 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped
 Juice of 1 lemon
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Lemon wedges for serving (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Set your oven to broil and place the rack about 6 inches from the heat source.

Place the cleaned sardines on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Drizzle the sardines with olive oil, and sprinkle with minced garlic, rosemary, thyme, parsley, salt, and pepper. Squeeze the lemon juice over the top.

Place the baking sheet under the broiler and cook for 8-10 minutes, until the sardines are golden and cooked through. The skin should be crispy, and the flesh should flake easily with a fork.

Transfer the sardines to a serving platter, and garnish with additional fresh herbs and lemon wedges if desired. Serve immediately.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 240 kcal	Proteins 21g	Carbohydrates 0g	Fats 18g
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Brown Rice and Salmon Bowl

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 30 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup brown rice, uncooked
 2 salmon fillets (approximately 6 oz each)
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 1 clove garlic, minced
 1 small cucumber, diced
 1 medium avocado, diced
 1/4 cup carrots, grated
 2 tablespoons soy sauce
 1 teaspoon sesame seeds (optional)
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Fresh cilantro (optional, for garnish)

DIRECTIONS

Cook the rice according to the recipe in this book.
 Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
 In a small bowl, mix olive oil, lemon juice, minced garlic, salt, and pepper. Brush the mixture onto the salmon fillets.
 Place the salmon fillets on the prepared baking sheet and bake for 12-15 minutes, or until the salmon is cooked through and flakes easily with a fork.
 While the salmon is baking, dice the cucumber and avocado, and grate the carrot. Set aside.
 Divide the cooked brown rice into bowls. Top each bowl with baked salmon, diced cucumber, avocado, and grated carrot.
 Drizzle low-sodium soy sauce over each bowl, sprinkle with sesame seeds, and garnish with fresh cilantro, if desired.
 Serve the bowls warm immediately or take it away with you.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 300 kcal	Proteins 23g	Carbohydrates 18g	Fats 21g
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Grilled Salmon

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 salmon fillets (about 6 oz each)
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 1 teaspoon dried dill
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
 Lemon wedges (for serving)
 Fresh parsley, chopped (for garnish)

DIRECTIONS

In a small bowl, mix together olive oil, lemon juice, dried dill, salt, and black pepper.
 Place the salmon fillets in a shallow dish or a resealable plastic bag. Pour the marinade over the salmon, ensuring each fillet is well coated. Let it marinate for at least 10 minutes.
 Preheat your grill to medium-high heat.
 Place the salmon fillets on the preheated grill, skin-side down if the skin is on. Grill for about 4-5 minutes per side, depending on the thickness of the fillets, until the salmon is cooked through and flakes easily with a fork.
 Remove the salmon from the grill and let it rest for a minute.
 Serve with lemon wedges and mild vegetable salad.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 206 kcal	Proteins 22g	Carbohydrates 0g	Fats 13g
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Crab and Avocado Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 pound fresh crab meat, picked over for shells
 2 large avocados, diced
 1/2 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
 1/4 cup red onion, finely chopped
 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
 2 tablespoons fresh cilantro, chopped
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
 1 tablespoon olive oil

DIRECTIONS

Gently combine the crab meat, diced avocado, cherry tomatoes, and red onion in a large mixing bowl.
 Drizzle the lime juice and olive oil over the mixture, then sprinkle with salt and pepper.
 Gently toss the ingredients together, being careful not to mash the avocado.
 Sprinkle the chopped cilantro on top and give the salad one final light toss.
 You can either serve it right away or let it cool in the fridge for 15 minutes before serving.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 320 kcal	Proteins 20g	Carbohydrates 14g	Fats 22g
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Baked Cod with Tomato and Basil

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 cod fillets (about 6 oz each)
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
 1/4 cup fresh basil, chopped
 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Lemon wedges (for serving)

DIRECTIONS

Preheat your oven to 400°F (200°C).
 Rinse the cod fillets under cold water and pat dry with paper towels. Place the fillets in a baking dish.
 In a medium bowl, combine the halved cherry tomatoes, minced garlic, chopped basil, olive oil, balsamic vinegar, salt, and pepper. Toss to combine.
 Spoon the tomato-basil mixture over the cod fillets, ensuring they are evenly covered.
 Place the baking dish in the preheated oven and bake for 15-20 minutes, or until the cod is opaque and flakes easily with a fork.
 Serve the baked cod hot, garnished with fresh basil and lemon wedges on the side.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 220 kcal	Proteins 30g	Carbohydrates 5g	Fats 10g
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Tuna Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 0 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 cans (5 oz each) of tuna in water, drained
 1 cup chopped cucumber
 1/2 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
 1/4 cup diced red onion
 1/4 cup diced celery
 1 avocado, diced
 2 cups mixed greens (arugula, spinach, or lettuce)
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Fresh parsley or dill (optional garnish)

DIRECTIONS

In a large mixing bowl, flake the drained tuna with a fork. Add cucumber, cherry tomatoes, red onion, celery, and avocado to the bowl with the tuna.
 In a small bowl, whisk together the olive oil, lemon juice, salt, and pepper. Pour the dressing over the tuna and vegetables. Gently toss until well combined.
 Place a portion of mixed greens on each plate and top with the tuna salad mixture. Garnish with fresh parsley or dill if desired.
 Serve immediately or refrigerate for up to 15 minutes for the flavors to meld.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 220 kcal	Proteins 18g	Carbohydrates 7g	Fats 14g
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Pasta with Shrimps & Tomatoes

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

8 oz whole wheat pasta
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 lb (450g) large shrimp, peeled, deveined
 1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
 1/4 cup fresh basil, chopped
 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
 Lemon wedges for serving (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Follow the directions on the package to cook the whole wheat pasta. After draining, set away.
 While the pasta is cooking, heat the olive oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add the shrimp to the pan and cook for 2-3 minutes on each side until they turn pink and opaque. Remove the shrimp from the pan and set aside.
 In the same pan, add the cherry tomatoes, salt, black pepper, and dried basil. Cook for 5-7 minutes, stirring occasionally, till the tomatoes are softened. Bring the cooked shrimp back to the pan and mix with the tomatoes by tossing them together. Cook for 2 minutes to ensure it is thoroughly heated.
 Add the cooked pasta to the pan and toss to combine with the shrimp and tomatoes. Sprinkle fresh basil over the pasta and serve, add grated Parmesan cheese, and lemon wedges (optional).

Per 1 serving:	Energy 320 kcal	Proteins 25g	Carbohydrates 42g	Fats 7g
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Squid Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 3 MIN

INGREDIENTS

400 g (14 oz) squid, cleaned and sliced into rings
 2 boiled eggs, chopped
 1/2 cup canned sweet corn, rinsed and drained
 2 green onions, finely chopped
 3 tbs low-fat mayonnaise
 1/4 tsp salt (or to taste)

DIRECTIONS

Bring a pot of water to a boil. Add squid rings and cook for 2–3 minutes until tender. Drain and let cool completely.
 In a large bowl, combine the boiled squid, chopped eggs, sweet corn, and green onion. Cut the boiled squid rings into small pieces and add to the bowl.
 Add low-fat mayonnaise and salt, then mix gently until well combined. Cover and chill in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes to allow flavors to blend.
 Serve cold as a light main or side dish.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 152 kcal	Proteins 17g	Carbohydrates 4g	Fats 8g
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Fish Tomato Stew

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 20 MIN

COOK TIME: 25 MIN

INGREDIENTS

600 g hake fillets (boneless, skinless)
 2 tablespoons whole grain wheat flour (for dusting fish)
 2 tablespoons olive oil (divided)
 1 medium onion, finely chopped
 1 medium carrot, grated
 1 red bell pepper, thinly sliced
 1 tablespoon tomato paste
 1/4 cup water or low-sodium vegetable/fish broth
 1/4 teaspoon salt (or to taste)
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
 Fresh parsley for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Cut the hake fillets into medium pieces. Dust hake fillets lightly with whole wheat flour on both sides.
 In a medium skillet, heat 1 tablespoon olive oil and roast the hake fillets for 2–3 minutes per side until lightly golden. Set aside.
 In a separate big skillet, heat the remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil and sauté onion over medium heat for 2–3 minutes. Add grated carrot and bell pepper, cook for another 5–6 minutes until vegetables soften. Stir in tomato paste, pour in water or broth, season with salt and pepper. Simmer for 3–4 minutes.
 Transfer the fish into the vegetable skillet. Dip the fillet pieces into the vegetables. Cover and stew on low heat for 10–12 minutes until fish is cooked through and tender.
 Serve warm, garnished with fresh parsley if desired.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 200 kcal	Proteins 25g	Carbohydrates 7g	Fats 7g
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Chapter 7. Beans & Peas

Legumes are on par with meat and fish dishes in terms of taste, nutritional content, and health advantages. However, legumes are also less expensive and considerably easier for the body to digest. The most common legumes have a low glycemic index, making them perfectly safe for diabetics, as you can see from the table of healthful foods in the book's "Choosing Foods" section. Legumes also provide a host of other nutritional advantages for diabetics.

Both soluble and insoluble fiber are present in substantial amounts in legumes. Soluble fiber aids in better digestion and helps to stabilize blood glucose levels by slowing down the absorption of sugar. Legumes are an excellent source of vegetable protein, which is essential for maintaining muscle mass and overall health. Iron, magnesium, potassium, and B vitamins—particularly folic acid—are abundant in legumes. These nutrients enhance metabolism, promote heart health, and maintain the body's normal cardiac function.

The most common uses of legumes are in salads, major dishes, and soups. They can serve as the foundation for cold appetizers or go well with vegetable stews.

Chickpea and Spinach Stew

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 medium onion, chopped
 3 cloves garlic, minced
 1 teaspoon ground cumin
 1/2 teaspoon ground paprika
 1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)
 1 can (15 oz) chickpeas, drained, rinsed
 1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes, not salted
 4 cups fresh spinach, roughly chopped
 1/2 cup vegetable broth or water
 Salt and pepper to taste
 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
 Fresh parsley for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and sauté for about 5 minutes until softened. Add the minced garlic and cook for another 1 minute.
 Stir in the cumin, paprika, turmeric, and red pepper flakes (if using). Cook for 2 minutes until fragrant.
 Add the chickpeas and diced tomatoes to the skillet. Stir to combine, then pour in the vegetable broth or water. Bring to a simmer and cook for 10 minutes, allowing the flavors to meld.
 Add the chopped spinach to the skillet, stirring until wilted, about 2-3 minutes.
 Stir in the lemon juice and season with salt and pepper to taste. Remove from heat.
 Ladle the stew into bowls and garnish with fresh parsley if desired. Serve immediately.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 180 kcal	Proteins 8g	Carbohydrates 28g	Fats 5g
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Red Lentil Curry

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 25 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup red lentils, rinsed
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 medium onion, chopped
 3 cloves garlic, minced
 1 tablespoon fresh ginger, minced
 1 tablespoon curry powder
 1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)
 1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes, not salted
 2 cups vegetable broth or water
 1 can (13.5 oz) light coconut milk
 2 cups fresh spinach, chopped
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Fresh cilantro for garnish

DIRECTIONS

Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and sauté for about 5 minutes until softened. Add the minced garlic and ginger, and cook for an additional 1 minute until fragrant.

Stir in the curry powder, turmeric, cumin, and cayenne pepper (if using). Cook for 1 minute, allowing the spices to release their flavors.

Add the red lentils and diced tomatoes to the pot, stirring to combine.

Pour in the vegetable broth and coconut milk. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to low. Simmer for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the lentils are tender and the curry has thickened.

Stir in the chopped spinach and cook for 2-3 minutes until wilted. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Ladle the curry into bowls and garnish with fresh cilantro if desired. Serve hot.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 280 kcal	Proteins 13g	Carbohydrates 36g	Fats 9g
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Hummus

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 5 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 can (15 oz) chickpeas, drained
 1/4 cup tahini
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
 Salt and pepper to taste
 2-3 tablespoons water
 1 tablespoon olive oil (optional)

DIRECTIONS

In a food processor, combine the chickpeas, tahini, olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, and cumin. Blend until smooth, adding water a tablespoon at a time until you reach your desired consistency. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Transfer the hummus to a serving bowl. Drizzle with additional olive oil if desired.

Serve the hummus with whole-grain toast or fresh vegetables (carrot, cucumber, bell pepper sticks) for dipping.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 220 kcal	Proteins 7g	Carbohydrates 20g	Fats 14g
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White Bean and Tomato Stew

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 25 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 medium onion, chopped
 1 teaspoon dried oregano
 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
 2 cans (15 oz each) white beans, drained, rinsed
 1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes, not salted
 2 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
 2 cups fresh spinach, chopped
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Fresh basil or parsley for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and sauté for about 5 minutes until softened. Stir in the dried oregano, and thyme. Cook for 1 minute to release the flavors of the spices. Add the white beans and diced tomatoes to the pot, stirring to combine. Pour in the vegetable broth and bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat to low and let the stew simmer for about 15 minutes, allowing the flavors to meld. Stir in the chopped spinach and cook for 2-3 minutes until wilted. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Ladle the stew into bowls and garnish with fresh basil or parsley if desired. Serve hot. Pair the stew with a side of sautéed or fresh leafy greens like spinach, kale, or arugula. For a more filling meal, serve the stew over cauliflower rice for a low-carb option, or choose a small serving of quinoa.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 250 kcal	Proteins 10g	Carbohydrates 38g	Fats 6g
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Chickpea and Quinoa Pilaf

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup quinoa, rinsed
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 small onion, chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
 1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
 1 can (15 oz) chickpeas, drained
 1 3/4 cups vegetable broth
 1/2 cup diced red bell pepper
 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
 Juice of 1 lemon
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Heat the olive oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and sauté for about 5 minutes until softened. Add the minced garlic and cook for 2 minutes until fragrant. Stir in the ground cumin and coriander, cooking for 1 minute. Add the rinsed quinoa and stir to coat it in the spices and oil. Pour in the vegetable broth and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for about 15 minutes, or until the quinoa is cooked and the liquid is absorbed. Once the quinoa is cooked, gently stir in the chickpeas and diced red bell pepper. Cook for an additional 2-3 minutes to heat through. Remove the saucepan from the heat. Stir in the chopped parsley and lemon juice. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Fluff the pilaf with a fork and serve warm.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 260 kcal	Proteins 8g	Carbohydrates 35g	Fats 8g
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Lentil and Roasted Vegetable Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 30 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup dried green or brown lentils, rinsed
 2 cups water or vegetable broth
 1 medium sweet potato, diced
 1 red bell pepper, diced
 1 zucchini, diced
 1 red onion, diced
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 teaspoon dried thyme
 Salt and pepper to taste
 2 cups fresh arugula or baby spinach
 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
 1 tablespoon lemon juice

DIRECTIONS

Bring the water or vegetable broth to a boil in a medium saucepan. Add the lentils, reduce the heat to low, and simmer for 20-25 minutes until tender. Drain and set aside to cool.

While lentil is cooking, preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C).

Toss the diced sweet potato, red bell pepper, zucchini, and red onion with 1 tablespoon of olive oil, dried thyme, salt, and pepper. Spread the vegetables on a baking sheet in a single layer and roast for 20-25 minutes, or until tender and slightly caramelized. Let them cool slightly.

In a small bowl, prepare the dressing: whisk together the remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil, balsamic vinegar, Dijon mustard, lemon juice, salt, and pepper.

In a large bowl, combine the cooked lentils, roasted vegetables, and fresh arugula or baby spinach. Drizzle the dressing over the salad and toss gently to combine.

Serve the salad warm or at room temperature.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 220 kcal	Proteins 9g	Carbohydrates 24g	Fats 8g
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Dry White Beans Vegetable Stew

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN
(+SOAKING TIME)

COOK TIME: 60 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup dry white beans
 4 cups water or vegetable broth
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1/2 small head of cabbage, chopped
 1 yellow bell pepper, diced
 1 red bell pepper, diced
 2 medium tomatoes, chopped
 1 medium onion, chopped
 1 medium carrot, diced
 4 tablespoon fresh dill & basil
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a medium-sized box, add dry white beans and 3 cups of water, cover and leave to soak overnight.

In a large pot, add the soaked white beans and 4 cups of water or low-sodium vegetable broth. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for about 45 minutes, or until the beans are tender.

In a separate pan, heat a tablespoon of olive oil over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and carrot, sauté for 5 minutes.

Stir in the diced yellow and red bell peppers, chopped cabbage, and tomatoes. Cook for another 5 minutes.

Add the sautéed vegetables to the pot with the cooked beans. Stir in the dill and basil, and season with salt and pepper to taste.

Simmer the stew for another 10 minutes, allowing the flavors to meld together. Ladle the stew into bowls and serve hot.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 210 kcal	Proteins 8g	Carbohydrates 33g	Fats 4g
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Lentil and Vegetable Soup

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 30 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup dried lentils, rinsed
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 medium onion, chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 2 medium carrots, diced
 2 celery stalks, diced
 1 zucchini, diced
 1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes, no salt added
 4 cups vegetable broth
 1 teaspoon dried thyme
 1 teaspoon ground cumin
 1 bay leaf
 Salt and pepper to taste
 2 cups fresh spinach, chopped
 1 tablespoon lemon juice

DIRECTIONS

In a large pot, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the chopped onion, garlic, carrots, and celery. Sauté for about 5 minutes until the vegetables are softened.
 Stir in the lentils, zucchini, diced tomatoes, vegetable broth, thyme, cumin, bay leaf, salt, and pepper. Bring the mixture to a boil.
 Reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for 25-30 minutes, or until the lentils are tender.
 Stir in the chopped spinach and cook for another 2-3 minutes until the greens are wilted.
 Remove the bay leaf, stir in the lemon juice if using, and adjust seasoning if necessary.
 Serve the soup hot.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 220 kcal	Proteins 12g	Carbohydrates 36g	Fats 4g
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Mashed Green Peas

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 60 MIN

INGREDIENTS

3/4 cup green split peas
 2-3 cups low-sodium vegetable broth or water (as needed for consistency)
 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder (optional)
 2 bay leaves
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Fresh dill, green onion, chopped (optional, for servings)

DIRECTIONS

Add green split peas and 2 cups of the water or vegetable broth to a medium saucepan. Don't cover the saucepan with a lid. Bring the green peas to boil over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat to low, cover and simmer for 50-60 minutes until the green peas are tender enough to mash. Add more water or broth to get desired consistency.
 Put unsalted butter, garlic powder, bay leaves, salt, and pepper into saucepan. Cook for 10 minutes more to allow the spices to bloom. Remove bay leaf, turn off the heat and set saucepan aside. Puree the cooked peas using an immersion blender.
 Serve the puree hot or warm sprinkled with chopped dill and green onion. The puree goes well with vegetable salad and whole wheat bread.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 116 kcal	Proteins 7g	Carbohydrates 18g	Fats 3g
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Mediterranean White Bean Feta Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 can (15 oz) white beans
 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
 1/2 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
 1/4 cup red onion, finely chopped
 1/4 cup cucumber, diced
 1/4 cup Kalamata olives, pitted and sliced
 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped
 2 tablespoons fresh basil, chopped
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Drain and rinse white beans.
 In a large bowl, combine the white beans, crumbled feta, cherry tomatoes, red onion, cucumber, and Kalamata olives.
 Stir in the chopped parsley and basil.
 In a small bowl, whisk together the olive oil, lemon juice, dried oregano, salt, and pepper.
 Pour the dressing over the salad and toss gently to combine all the ingredients.
 Serve the salad immediately or refrigerate for 15-20 minutes to allow the flavors to meld together.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 220 kcal	Proteins 8g	Carbohydrates 22g	Fats 12g
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Black Bean Soup with Chicken

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 30 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 medium onion, chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 2 medium carrots, diced
 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
 2 cans (30 oz) black beans, drained, rinsed
 2 cups cooked chicken breast, diced
 1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes, not salted
 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a large pot, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the chopped onion, minced garlic, diced celery, and diced carrots. Sauté for about 5 minutes until the vegetables are softened.
 Pour in the low-sodium chicken broth, then add the black beans, diced tomatoes, and cooked chicken. Stir to combine.
 Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and let it simmer for about 20 minutes, allowing the flavors to meld together.
 Stir in the fresh lime juice. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
 Ladle the soup into bowls and serve hot with chopped dill or cilantro.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 320 kcal	Proteins 30g	Carbohydrates 35g	Fats 7g
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Minestrone Soup

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 30 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 medium onion, chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 2 medium carrots, diced
 2 celery stalks, diced
 1 zucchini, diced
 1 cup green beans, chopped
 1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes
 4 cups vegetable broth
 1 can (15 oz) kidney beans
 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
 1 cup chopped spinach or kale
 1/2 cup whole-grain pasta or barley
 Salt, pepper to taste
 Fresh parsley for garnish

DIRECTIONS

Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the chopped onion, garlic, carrots, and celery. Sauté for about 5 minutes until the vegetables are softened.

Stir in the diced zucchini, green beans, diced tomatoes, and vegetable broth. Bring the mixture to a boil.

Stir in the kidney beans, oregano, basil, and black pepper. Reduce the heat and let the soup simmer for about 15 minutes.

Add pasta or barley to the pot and cook for an additional 10-15 minutes, or until tender. Stir in the chopped spinach or kale and cook for another 2-3 minutes until wilted.

Adjust seasoning with salt if needed. Ladle the soup into bowls and garnish with fresh parsley if desired. Serve hot.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 220 kcal	Proteins 8g	Carbohydrates 32g	Fats 4g
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Red Bean Salad

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 5 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 can (16 oz) red beans, drained, rinsed
 1 medium carrot, fine grated
 20 g of curly parsley, chopped
 1 small red onion, chopped
 1/2 large red pepper, cut into strips
 1/2 large yellow pepper, cut into strips
 4 tablespoon sunflower oil
 Salt and peppers to taste

DIRECTIONS

Prepare and cut all the vegetables, open the beans, drain well.

Combine all the ingredients except the beans in a middle-sized bowl. Stir gently, add 2 tablespoons of olive or sunflower oil.

Add the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil to the beans, mix, then add the beans to the rest of the ingredients and mix gently again.

Season with salt and pepper to taste. Toss gently again to combine. Serve cold or at room temperature with hot cooked grains.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 210 kcal	Proteins 6g	Carbohydrates 22g	Fats 11g
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Chapter 8. Vegetable Meals & Soups

Without exaggeration, soups and vegetable dishes are essential parts of a well-balanced diabetic diet. Most vegetables are quickly digested, low in carbohydrates, and high in vitamins and minerals. Since vegetable foods contain a high amount of dietary fiber, they slow down the absorption of sugar into the bloodstream. It is therefore essential to incorporate them into each and every meal. Your body will appreciate it if you simply add a fresh cucumber, tomato, piece of kohlrabi, or paprika to your whole-grain cereal or meat meal, even if you don't have time to make a salad or stew. Fresh veggies have a positive impact on the health of the intestines and internal organs, improve digestion, and saturate the body with nutrients.

Although most vegetable dishes are low in calories, they help regulate appetite, stop overeating, and extend feelings of satiety—all of which contribute to weight control. This is particularly crucial for diabetics because being overweight is a typical co-morbidity of the disease.

There are various methods to cook vegetables, including baking, boiling, stewing, and eating them raw. This makes it possible to prepare a range of delicious and healthful dishes, which enhances the appeal and ease of sticking to a diabetic diet.

You will find a variety of light vegetable salads in the earlier chapters of this book, along with vegetable stews that include meat or beans. In this chapter, we'll concentrate on hot vegetable dishes and vegetable soups. They are ideal for times when you wish to set aside "pleasantly healthy days" for your body to relax.

Creamy Vegetable Soup

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 12 MIN

COOK TIME: 25 MIN

INGREDIENTS

200 g broccoli florets
200 g cauliflower florets
1 medium carrot, chopped
1 medium zucchini, diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoons olive oil
3 cups water (720 ml)
1/2 cup heavy cream (120 ml)
1/2 teaspoon salt (or to taste)
Spices to taste (black pepper, nutmeg, paprika)
2 tbsp chopped green onion (for serving)

DIRECTIONS

Heat olive oil in a large pot, add garlic, and sauté for 1–2 minutes until fragrant.
Add broccoli, cauliflower, carrot, and zucchini. Stir for 2–3 minutes.
Pour in water, add salt and spices, bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes until vegetables are soft.
Use a blender (immersion or regular) to puree the soup until smooth and creamy.
Stir in heavy cream and gently reheat (do not boil).
Serve hot, garnished with chopped green onion.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 110 kcal	Proteins 3g	Carbohydrates 16g	Fats 4g
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Baked Brussels Sprouts

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 lb (450g) Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1/2 teaspoon salt (optional)
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder (optional)
 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Preheat your oven to 400°F (200°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Trim the ends off the Brussels sprouts and cut them in half. Place them on the prepared baking sheet.

Drizzle the Brussels sprouts with olive oil, then toss them to coat evenly. Sprinkle with salt, black pepper, dried oregano, dried basil, and garlic powder (if using).

Spread the Brussels sprouts in a single layer on the baking sheet and roast for 20-25 minutes, turning them halfway through, until they are golden brown and crispy on the edges.

After roasting, drizzle the Brussels sprouts with balsamic vinegar and toss to coat evenly. Serve hot as a side dish, garnished with additional seasonings or herbs if desired.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 180 kcal	Proteins 2g	Carbohydrates 8g	Fats 6g
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Naturally Fermented Cucumbers

SERVINGS: 8

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

FERMENTED TIME: 20 HOURS

INGREDIENTS

8-10 small pickling cucumbers (750g), washed well
 2-3 garlic cloves, peeled
 1-2 sprigs of fresh dill (with stems and flowers, if possible)
 5-7 whole black peppercorns (optional)
 1 bay leaf (optional)

FOR BRINE

1-liter cold filtered water (chlorine-free)
 1 heaping tablespoon (about 18g) salt (like sea salt or pickling salt)

DIRECTIONS

Make the brine: dissolve the salt completely in the water. Set aside. Pack the jar: place garlic, dill, peppercorns, and bay leaf at the bottom of a clean 1-liter glass jar. Cut off both ends of the cucumbers. Pack cucumbers vertically, tightly but without crushing them.

Bring the brine to boil and pour hot over the cucumbers until fully submerged. Leave at least 2 cm of space at the top of the jar. Cover loosely with the jar lid or a clean cloth secured with a rubber band. Place the jar in a deep plate.

Leave at room temperature (18–24°C / 65–72°F) for 18-24 hours. Then, taste a cucumber. If it has desired taste, move the jar into the fridge.

Cucumbers are ready to eat. If you want the cucumber to have a richer taste, leave the jar at room temperature for 6-8 hours more, then move it into the fridge. Keep cucumbers in the original brine in the fridge.

Salted cucumbers go well with meat and fish meals, or can be added to a vegetable salad.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 120 kcal	Proteins 2g	Carbohydrates 25g	Fats 3g
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Baba Ganoush

SERVINGS: 6

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 35 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 medium eggplants (~1 kg total)
 3 cloves garlic
 2 tablespoons tahini (30 g)
 2 tablespoons olive oil (30 g)
 Juice of 1 lemon (~3 tablespoons)
 2 tablespoons sour cream or soft cheese (optionally, for add flavor and creamy texture)
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 Spices to taste (paprika, cumin, parsley)

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Pierce the eggplants with a fork and roast them for 30–35 minutes until soft and the skins are charred.

Let the eggplants cool slightly, then peel and scoop out the flesh into a bowl.

Add garlic, tahini, olive oil, lemon juice, sour cream, or soft cheese (optionally), and salt.

Mash with a fork or blend until creamy.

Garnish with paprika, cumin, or parsley and a drizzle of olive oil before serving.

Baba ganoush works well as a spread on whole grain crackers, as a dip for raw vegetables, or as a side dish.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 141 kcal	Proteins 3g	Carbohydrates 12g	Fats 10g
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Mushroom Barley Soup

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 40 MIN

INGREDIENTS

8 oz mushrooms, sliced (such as cremini or button mushrooms)
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 medium potato, peeled, diced
 1 medium onion, chopped
 2 medium carrots, diced
 2 celery stalks, diced
 1/2 cup pearl barley, rinsed
 6 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
 1 teaspoon dried thyme
 1 bay leaf
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Fresh parsley, chopped (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the chopped onion, carrots, and celery. Sauté for about 5 minutes until the vegetables are softened.

Add the sliced mushrooms to the pot and cook for another 5 minutes, until the mushrooms are softened and have released their moisture.

Stir in the rinsed pearl barley, diced potato, vegetable broth, thyme, and bay leaf. Bring the mixture to a boil.

Reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for 30 minutes, or until the barley is tender.

Remove the bay leaf and adjust seasoning with salt and pepper if needed. Stir in fresh parsley if using.

Ladle the soup into bowls and serve hot.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 105 kcal	Proteins 4g	Carbohydrates 22g	Fats 2g
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Broccoli Soup

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 30 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 medium onion, finely chopped
 1 medium carrot, chopped
 1 zucchini, chopped
 1 leek, chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 broccoli, chopped into florets
 20.2 oz low-sodium vegetable broth
 1/2 tablespoon dried basil
 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
 Salt to taste.
 Fresh dill or parsley, chopped (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the chopped onion, carrot, leek, zucchini, and garlic, cook for about 5-7 minutes. Stir from time to time.
 Add the vegetable broth and broccoli to the pot and bring it to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, cook for another 10-15 minutes, until the vegetables are softened.
 Stir in the dried basil, unsalted butter and black pepper. Simmer for another 2-4 minutes. Adjust seasoning with salt.
 Ladle the soup into bowls and garnish with fresh parsley or dill if desired. Serve hot.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 120 kcal	Proteins 5g	Carbohydrates 16g	Fats 7g
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Easy Zucchini Stew

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 small onion, chopped
 1 medium carrot, grated
 4 medium zucchinis, diced
 2 middle tomatoes, skinless, finely chopped
 1 teaspoon dried oregano
 1 cloves garlic, grated
 Salt and pepper to taste
 1/4 cup fresh dill and basil, finely chopped (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Grate and chop the vegetables. To peel tomatoes, pour boiling water over them in a medium bowl for a couple of minutes.
 Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and grated carrot, and sauté for about 5 minutes until softened.
 Stir in the diced zucchini. Cook the zucchini for 10-15 minutes until softened. Stir the vegetables from time to time.
 Add chopped tomatoes, dried oregano, grated garlic, salt, and pepper to the pot. Stir to combine the ingredients. Cover and simmer for 5-7 minutes more.
 Sprinkle with the fresh dill or basil if using. Adjust seasoning if needed.
 Serve the stew hot with whole-grain toast.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 120 kcal	Proteins 3g	Carbohydrates 16g	Fats 4g
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Eggplant Stir-Fry

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 large eggplant, diced
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 medium onion, sliced
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 red bell pepper, sliced
 1 yellow bell pepper, sliced
 2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
 1 teaspoon sesame oil
 1 teaspoon fresh ginger, minced
 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)
 Fresh basil or cilantro, chopped
 1 tablespoon sesame seeds (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Dice the eggplant and set it aside. Sprinkle with salt and let it sit for 10 minutes to remove excess moisture, then rinse and pat dry. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet or wok over medium heat. Add the sliced onion and minced garlic, sautéing for about 3 minutes until fragrant and softened. Add the diced eggplant to the skillet and cook for 5-7 minutes until it begins to soften and brown. Stir in the sliced red and yellow bell peppers. Cook for another 3-4 minutes until the peppers are tender. In a small bowl, mix the soy sauce, rice vinegar, sesame oil, minced ginger, and red pepper flakes (if using). Pour the sauce over the vegetables and stir to combine, cooking for another 2 minutes. Remove from heat and garnish with fresh basil or cilantro and sesame seeds if desired. Serve hot.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 150 kcal	Proteins 3g	Carbohydrates 18g	Fats 8g
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Gazpacho

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 0 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 ripe tomatoes, chopped
 1 cucumber, peeled and chopped
 1 red bell pepper, chopped
 1 small red onion, chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 2 cups vegetable juice (like V8)
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
 1 teaspoon ground cumin
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Fresh basil or parsley (optional)

DIRECTIONS

In a large bowl, combine the chopped tomatoes, cucumber, red bell pepper, red onion, and minced garlic. Transfer the vegetable mixture to a blender or food processor. Add the vegetable juice, olive oil, red wine vinegar, and ground cumin. Blend until smooth. If you prefer a chunkier texture, pulse the mixture until it reaches your desired consistency. Taste and adjust the seasoning with salt and pepper. You can also add more vinegar or cumin if desired. Transfer the gazpacho to a large container and refrigerate for at least 1 hour to allow the flavors to meld. Pour the chilled gazpacho into bowls and garnish with fresh basil or parsley if desired. Serve cold.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 120 kcal	Proteins 2g	Carbohydrates 14g	Fats 7g
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Vegetable Stew with Mushrooms

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 30 MIN

INGREDIENTS

8 oz (225g) mushrooms, sliced
 2 medium zucchinis, diced
 2 celery stalks, chopped
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 medium onion, chopped
 2 garlic cloves, minced
 2 medium carrots, sliced
 1 red bell pepper, diced
 1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes, not salted
 1 cup vegetable broth
 1 teaspoon dried thyme
 1 teaspoon dried oregano
 1 bay leaf
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Fresh parsley, chopped (optional)

DIRECTIONS

In a big pot, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and minced garlic, sauté until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the sliced carrots, chopped celery, and diced red bell pepper. Cook for another 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in the sliced mushrooms and cook for an additional 5 minutes until the mushrooms begin to soften. Add the diced zucchinis, canned tomatoes (with their juice), and vegetable broth. Stir in the thyme, oregano, and bay leaf. Bring the stew to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and simmer for 10-15 minutes, or until the vegetables are tender. Remove the bay leaf, season with salt and pepper to taste, and garnish with fresh parsley if using.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 150 kcal	Proteins 4g	Carbohydrates 20g	Fats 7g
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Grilled Vegetables

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 bell peppers, cut into large strips
 1 zucchini, sliced into rounds
 1 eggplant, sliced into rounds
 1 red onion, cut into wedges
 8 oz (225g) mushrooms, halved
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 Dried oregano, thyme, basil to taste
 Salt and pepper to taste
 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the grill to medium-high heat. In a large bowl, toss the bell peppers, zucchini, eggplant, red onion, and mushrooms with olive oil, oregano, thyme, basil, salt, and pepper until evenly coated. Place the vegetables on the grill in a single layer. Grill for 5-7 minutes per side, or until the vegetables are tender and have grill marks. Remove the vegetables from the grill and drizzle with balsamic vinegar if desired. Serve immediately as a side dish or over a bed of greens for a light meal.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 110 kcal	Proteins 2g	Carbohydrates 14g	Fats 7g
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Zucchini Pancakes

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 medium zucchinis, grated
 1/4 cup whole grain wheat flour
 1 large egg, beaten
 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
 Salt and pepper to taste
 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese (optionally, for serving)
 2 tablespoons olive oil (for frying)

DIRECTIONS

Grate the zucchinis and place them in a large bowl. Sprinkle with a pinch of salt, mix well, and let sit for 15 minutes. Squeeze out as much moisture as possible.

In a large bowl, combine the grated zucchini, whole-grain flour, beaten egg, oregano, salt, and pepper. Mix until well combined.

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Scoop about 2 tablespoons of the zucchini mixture into the skillet for each pancake. Flatten each scoop slightly with a spatula.

Cook the pancakes for about 3-4 minutes on each side, or until they are golden brown and crispy.

Remove the pancakes from the skillet and place them on a paper towel-lined plate to drain any excess oil.

Serve the zucchini pancakes warm, optionally with a side of Greek yogurt or a sprinkle of fresh herbs and grated Parmesan.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 150 kcal	Proteins 9g	Carbohydrates 7g	Fats 14g
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Sweet Potato Hash

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and diced (about 2 cups)
 1 small onion, chopped
 1 red bell pepper, diced
 1 green bell pepper, diced
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Fresh parsley, chopped (for garnish)

DIRECTIONS

Peel and dice the sweet potatoes into small cubes to ensure even cooking.

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and sauté for 2-3 minutes until it begins to soften.

Add the diced sweet potatoes to the skillet. Cook for 8-10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the sweet potatoes start to soften.

Stir in the diced red and green bell peppers and the minced garlic. Cook for another 5-7 minutes, until the vegetables are tender and the sweet potatoes are golden brown.

Sprinkle the smoked paprika, ground cumin, salt, and pepper over the hash. Stir well to combine and cook for an additional 2 minutes.

Remove the skillet from heat, garnish the sweet potato hash with fresh chopped parsley. Serve hot.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 220 kcal	Proteins 4g	Carbohydrates 24g	Fats 8g
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Roasted Asparagus

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 lb (450g) fresh asparagus, trimmed
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder (optional)
 1 tablespoon lemon juice (optional)
 Fresh parsley or grated Parmesan (optional, for garnish)

DIRECTIONS

Rinse the asparagus under cold water. Trim the woody ends off the asparagus.
 In a big skillet, heat the olive oil under medium-high heat. Add the asparagus and cook for 12-15 minutes, stirring from time to time, until tender and slightly crispy at the tips. Remove the asparagus to the big plate and sprinkle with salt, black pepper, and garlic powder (if using).
 Drizzle the asparagus with fresh lemon juice for added flavor.
 Sprinkle with fresh parsley or grated Parmesan cheese before serving, if desired.
 Serve hot as a side dish to your main course.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 60 kcal	Proteins 2g	Carbohydrates 5g	Fats 4g
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Cauliflower and Leek Soup

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 25 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoon olive oil
 2 medium leeks, white and light green parts only, sliced
 1 medium head of cauliflower, chopped into florets
 4 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
 Salt to taste
 1/4 cup unsweetened almond milk or low-fat milk (optional)
 Fresh parsley for garnish
 Garlic powder to taste (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the sliced leeks and sauté for about 5 minutes until softened.
 Stir in the chopped cauliflower florets and pour in the vegetable broth. Add the dried thyme, black pepper, and garlic powder. Bring to a boil.
 Reduce the heat to low, cover, and let the soup simmer for 20 minutes until the cauliflower is tender.
 Using an immersion blender, blend the soup until smooth. If you don't have an immersion blender, carefully transfer the soup in batches to a blender and blend until smooth.
 If using, stir in the almond milk or low-fat milk to add creaminess. Heat the soup through but do not bring it back to a boil.
 Adjust seasoning with salt if needed. Ladle the soup into bowls and garnish with fresh parsley if desired. Serve hot.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 120 kcal	Proteins 4g	Carbohydrates 14g	Fats 6g
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Ratatouille

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 40 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 medium eggplant, diced
 1 medium zucchini, sliced
 1 medium yellow squash, sliced
 2 bell peppers, diced
 1 small onion, finely chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 can (14 oz) diced tomatoes
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 teaspoon dried oregano
 1 teaspoon dried thyme
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Fresh basil for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Wash and chop the eggplant, zucchini, yellow squash, bell peppers, and onion. Set aside.
 Heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onions and garlic and sauté for 3-4 minutes. Add the diced eggplant and bell peppers, and cook for 5-7 min, stirring occasionally.
 Stir in the zucchini, yellow squash, 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Continue cooking for another 5 minutes.
 Add the canned diced tomatoes, oregano, thyme, salt, and pepper. Reduce the heat to low and let the mixture simmer uncovered for about 25-30 minutes, stirring occasionally.
 Taste the ratatouille and adjust seasoning as needed with more salt and pepper. Once the vegetables are tender and the sauce has thickened, remove from heat. Garnish with fresh basil and parsley if desired.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 120 kcal	Proteins 3g	Carbohydrates 15g	Fats 7g
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Creamy Mushroom Soup

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 12 MIN

COOK TIME: 25 MIN

INGREDIENTS

200 g mushrooms, sliced
 1 medium potato, peeled, diced
 1 small celery root, diced
 1 small carrot, chopped
 1 red paprika, chopped
 2 tablespoons chopped green onion (for serving)
 3 cups water (720 ml)
 1/2 cup sour cream (120 g)
 1/2 tsp salt (or to taste)
 1/2 tsp black pepper
 1 tbsp olive oil (for sautéing)

DIRECTIONS

Heat olive oil in a pot, add mushrooms and cook for 3-4 minutes until lightly browned.
 Add celery root, potato, carrot, paprika, and water. Bring to a boil and cook for 15 minutes until vegetables are soft.
 Reduce heat and stir in sour cream, salt, and black pepper. Mix well to create a creamy broth.
 Simmer gently for 3-4 minutes.
 Serve hot, topped with chopped green onion.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 112 kcal	Proteins 4g	Carbohydrates 16g	Fats 6g
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Baked Eggplants

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 25 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 medium eggplants (28.5 oz),
diced
1 can (14 oz) tomatoes, no-salted
1/2 teaspoon salt
5-6 tablespoon olive or sunflower
oil
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 garlic clove, grated
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
A pinch of sugar-free sweetener
3/4 cup Mozzarella, grated
1/4 cup Parmesan, grated

DIRECTIONS

Wash eggplants and cut each one into slices lengthwise. Salt them and let it stand for a while. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).
Heat the pan with 2 tablespoons of oil and fry the eggplants until golden brown on both sides for 3-4 minutes on each side. Add more oil when it is absorbed by the eggplants.
Pure canned tomatoes in a blender, add 2 tablespoons tomato paste, 1 grated clove of garlic, 1/2 teaspoon of oregano and a pinch of sugar-free sweetener. Cook for 3-5 minutes in a small saucepan on medium heat, stirring from time to time.
Grate Parmesan and mozzarella into different bowls. Layer the eggplant, tomato sauce, and mozzarella in a ceramic baking dish (8x9 inches). Continue layering until all the ingredients are utilized. Don't top the layer with any mozzarella.
Bake the eggplants for 20 minutes. Then take them out, sprinkle with grated Parmesan and bake for another 10 minutes. Serve the dish hot.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 180 kcal	Proteins 7g	Carbohydrates 8g	Fats 14g
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Marinated Zucchini

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

MARINATE TIME: 2 HOURS

INGREDIENTS

2 bell peppers, cut into large
strips
1 zucchini, sliced into rounds
1 eggplant, sliced into rounds
1 red onion, cut into wedges
8 oz (225g) mushrooms, halved
2 tablespoons olive oil
Dried oregano, thyme, basil to
taste
Salt and pepper to taste
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
(optional)

DIRECTIONS

Thinly slice the zucchini into rounds or ribbons using a knife or mandoline.
In a small bowl, whisk together the honey (or sugar-free sweetener), olive oil, lemon juice, and salt.
In a shallow dish, arrange the zucchini slices in layers. Place the bay leaf and peppercorns between layers for added flavor.
Pour the prepared marinade over the zucchini, ensuring the slices are well coated.
Cover the dish with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes to 1 hour, allowing the flavors to meld together.
Remove the bay leaf and peppercorns before serving. Enjoy the marinated zucchini as a light side dish or salad.
Store zucchini in the refrigerator up to 5 days. Keep it in the marinade.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 120 kcal	Proteins 1g	Carbohydrates 9g	Fats 8g
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Chapter 9. Desserts

These days, desserts are very popular not only on holidays or special days. Psychologists often advise people to “treat themselves” to a delicious cheesecake or tiramisu almost every day. It's fairly common to find little coffee shops with a display case full of cakes, croissants, and other sweet treats in addition to coffee and tea. You will undoubtedly be offered a doughnut or chocolate biscuit to go with your coffee even at gas stations. Naturally, all of these "little joys" are high-carbohydrate foods that contain starch, sugar, and wheat flour. In this situation, what should people with diabetes do? Undoubtedly, in order to protect your body's well-being and appropriate blood glucose levels, specifically:

- Create your own culinary masterpieces that will be a low-carb healthy alternative to traditional desserts (and this section will help you with that!).
- In a coffee shop or gas station, look for low-carb dessert options. A packet of pistachios or other nuts, whole-grain bars, sugar-free bars, dried fruit, and berry ice cream are a few examples of these.
- Find out what low-carb treats are available or what to order by asking the waiter or staff member.
- Bring something tasty and healthy with you that can make you happy instead of unhealthy desserts. It can be your favourite cheese, berries, fruit, sugar-free yoghurt, fruit pastilles, coconut or other sugar free cookies.
- Aim for desserts that contain **15 to 25 grams of carbohydrates** per serving. This is generally considered a safe range for people with diabetes, as it aligns with typical carb recommendations for snacks.
- Desserts that contain fiber can help slow down the absorption of sugar, reducing blood sugar spikes. Ingredients like nuts, seeds, whole grains, and fruits with high fiber content (such as berries) are good options.
- Be cautious of desserts labeled as "sugar-free" or "low-fat," as they may still contain significant carbs or hidden sugars like maltodextrin or dextrose.

Even low-carb desserts can affect blood sugar if eaten in large quantities. Stick to appropriate portion sizes to keep carb intake under control. Keep the portion size to **around 100 to 200 calories** per serving. This helps in managing overall calorie intake, which is important for weight control and blood sugar management.

Below you can find examples of good desserts and their portion sizes:

- Low-Carb Cookies: 1-2 small cookies (depending on their carb content, typically around 15-20g of carbs).
- Greek Yogurt with Berries: 1/2 cup of Greek yogurt topped with 1/4 cup of fresh berries.
- Chia Seed Pudding: 1/2 cup of chia seed pudding.
- Almond Flour Brownies: one small square (about 2x2 inches).
- Dark Chocolate (70% or higher): 1-2 small squares (about 10-15g of carbs).

Yes, all of these things are quite atypical for a modern person, but who knows, maybe your actions will be an inspiration to others and they will follow your example? Many individuals without diabetes exhibit comparable behaviors and make similar dietary choices. You shouldn't be ashamed of it or try to hide it. Your concern for what you put into your body and how it will function tomorrow, next month, and next year is admirable!

Layered Strawberry Cake

SERVINGS: 8

PREP TIME: 30 MIN

CHILL TIME: 4-6 HOURS

ALMOND LAYER

3 large eggs
Sweetener (amount corresponds to 3 tablespoons of sugar)
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
50g almond flour
10g coconut flour
Pinch of salt

SOUR CREAM JELLY LAYER

200g sour cream (10–15% fat)
200g farmer's cheese or cream cheese
Sweetener by taste
10g unflavored gelatin powder
50 ml warm boiled water
1/2 tsp vanilla extract

STRAWBERRY JELLY LAYER

300g fresh or frozen strawberries
Sweetener by taste
10g unflavored gelatin powder
70 ml cold water

DIRECTIONS

Firstly, make the biscuit layer. Preheat oven to 170°C (340°F). Line a 20cm springform pan with parchment. Beat eggs with a pinch of salt, sweetener, and vanilla until creamy. If the sweetener is in tablet form and is difficult to dissolve in mixtures, it is better to first dissolve it in a small amount of water (1 tablespoon). Sift in almond flour and coconut flour, fold gently.

Pour batter into the pan. Bake 15–18 minutes or until golden and firm. Let cool fully in the pan.

Secondly, prepare sour cream jelly. Bloom gelatin in 60 ml cold water for 5–10 min. Warm gently (microwave or stovetop) until fully dissolved (do not boil).

In a bowl, mix sour cream, sweetener, and vanilla. Add melted gelatin, mix well. Pour over the cooled biscuit base. Chill for one hour or until set.

Next, prepare strawberry jelly. Bloom gelatin in 70 ml cold water. In a saucepan, simmer strawberries and sweetener for 5–7 minutes. Blend if smooth texture is desired, or leave chunky. Stir in melted gelatin. Cool to room temp, then pour over the sour cream layer.

Lastly, chill the whole pie in the fridge for 4-6 hours (or overnight) until fully set before serving.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 190 kcal	Proteins 8g	Carbohydrates 8g	Fats 12g
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Berry Parfait

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 0 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup Greek yogurt (plain)
1 cup berries (strawberries, blueberries, raspberries)
Sugar-free sweetener by taste
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/4 cup granola (low-carb)

DIRECTIONS

In a medium bowl, mix the Greek yogurt with the sugar-free sweetener and vanilla extract until well combined.

In 4 serving glasses, spoon a layer of the sweetened yogurt into the bottom of each glass. Top the yogurt with a layer of mixed berries. Repeat the layers of yogurt and berries until the glasses are filled, ending with a layer of berries on top. If using, sprinkle a small amount of low-carb granola on top of each parfait.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 120 kcal	Proteins 8g	Carbohydrates 12g	Fats 4g
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Coconut Cookies

SERVINGS: 12 COOKIES

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 12 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup unsweetened shredded coconut
 1/2 cup almond flour
 1/4 cup sugar-free sweetener (such as erythritol or stevia, adjust to taste)
 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
 1 large egg
 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
 2 tablespoons coconut oil, melted

DIRECTIONS

Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
 In a large bowl, combine the shredded coconut, almond flour, sweetener, and baking powder. Add the egg, vanilla extract, and melted coconut oil to the dry mixture. Stir until all ingredients are well incorporated, forming a sticky dough.
 Scoop about 1 tablespoon of dough for each cookie, roll into a ball, and place on the baking sheet. Press each ball down slightly to flatten.
 Bake for 12-15 minutes or until the edges are golden brown.
 Let the cookies cool on the baking sheet for a few minutes, then transfer them to a wire rack to cool completely.
 Enjoy these tasty diabetes-friendly low-carb cookies.

Per 1 cookie:	Energy 80 kcal	Proteins 1.5g	Carbohydrates 3g	Fats 7g
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Sugar-Free Berry Jelly

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 5 MIN
+ CHILL TIME

INGREDIENTS

2 cups fresh or frozen strawberries (or any other low-carb berries), hulled
 1 cup water, divided
 1 packet (8 g) unflavored gelatin
 Sugar-free sweetener by taste (e.g., erythritol, stevia)
 1 teaspoon lemon juice
 Optional: a few drops of natural red food coloring (for a brighter color)

DIRECTIONS

In a blender or food processor, puree the strawberries with 1/2 cup of water until smooth.
 In a small bowl, sprinkle the gelatin over the remaining 1/2 cup of cold water and let it sit for 5 minutes to bloom (dissolve).
 In a medium saucepan, combine the strawberry puree, sugar-free sweetener, and lemon juice. Heat over medium heat until warm, but do not boil.
 Stir the bloomed gelatin into the warm strawberry mixture, stirring constantly until the gelatin is completely dissolved. Add a few drops of food coloring (optional). You may strain the mixture through a fine mesh sieve to remove the seeds.
 Pour the mixture into individual serving cups. Chill in the refrigerator for 4-6 hours.
 Enjoy this light and healthy dessert!

Per 1 serving:	Energy 30 kcal	Proteins 2g	Carbohydrates 5g	Fats 0g
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Almond Brownies

SERVINGS: 12 PIECES

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup almond flour
 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
 1/2 cup sugar-free sweetener (such as stevia or erythritol, adjust to taste)
 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 2 large eggs
 1/3 cup unsweetened almond milk
 1/4 cup melted coconut oil or unsweetened applesauce for a lower-fat option
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 1/4 cup chopped almonds (optional, for added crunch)

DIRECTIONS

Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C) and line an 8x8-inch baking dish with parchment paper.

In a large bowl, combine almond flour, cocoa powder, sugar-free sweetener, baking powder, and salt. In another bowl, whisk together the eggs, almond milk, melted coconut oil or applesauce, and vanilla extract.

Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and stir until smooth. Fold in the chopped almonds if desired.

Pour the batter into the prepared baking dish and spread it evenly. Bake for 20-25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.

Allow the brownies to cool in the pan for 10 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely before cutting. Cut into 12 pieces.

Enjoy your healthy low-carb dessert!

Per 1 serving:	Energy 120 kcal	Proteins 4g	Carbohydrates 5g	Fats 10g
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Sesame Cookies

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 12 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup almond flour
 1/4 cup sesame seeds
 1/4 cup coconut oil, melted
 Sugar-free sweetener by taste (e.g., erythritol, stevia)
 1 large egg
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
 A pinch of salt

DIRECTIONS

Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

In a medium bowl, combine the almond flour, sesame seeds, sugar-free sweetener, baking powder, and a pinch of salt. Add the melted coconut oil, egg, and vanilla extract. Mix until a dough forms.

Form small balls of dough (about 1 inch in diameter) and place them on the prepared baking sheet. Flatten each ball slightly with a fork.

Bake the cookies in the preheated oven for 10-12 minutes, or until they are golden brown.

Remove the cookies from the oven and let them cool. Enjoy sesame cookies with a cup of tea.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 130 kcal	Proteins 4g	Carbohydrates 4g	Fats 11g
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Dark Chocolate-Covered Almonds

SERVINGS: 6

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 5 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup raw almonds
 1/2 cup dark chocolate (70% cocoa or higher), chopped
 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract (optional)
 A pinch of sea salt (optional)

DIRECTIONS

(Optional step) Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C). Spread the almonds in a single layer on a baking sheet and toast them in the oven till they lightly browned. Allow them to cool slightly.

In a microwave-safe bowl, melt the dark chocolate in 30-second intervals, stirring between each interval until smooth. If desired, stir in the vanilla extract to the melted chocolate. Add the almonds to the melted chocolate and stir until all almonds are evenly coated.

Using a fork or slotted spoon, lift the almonds out of the chocolate, allowing any excess chocolate to drip off. Place the chocolate-covered almonds on a parchment-lined baking sheet in a single layer. If desired, sprinkle a pinch of sea salt over them.

Place the baking sheet in the refrigerator for about 15-20 minutes, or until the chocolate is fully set.

Once the chocolate is set, transfer the almonds to an airtight container for storage. Enjoy this tasty diabetes-friendly sweet!

Per 1 serving:	Energy 180 kcal	Proteins 4g	Carbohydrates 10g	Fats 15g
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Coconut Macaroons

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 cups unsweetened shredded coconut
 1/4 cup coconut flour
 Sugar-free sweetener by taste (e.g., erythritol, stevia)
 3 large egg whites
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 A pinch of salt

DIRECTIONS

Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Mix the shredded coconut, coconut flour, sugar-free sweetener, and a pinch of salt in a big bowl.

In a separate bowl, whisk the egg whites until soft peaks form. Add the vanilla extract to the egg whites and gently fold them into the coconut mixture.

Form small mounds of the coconut mixture using a tablespoon. Place them on the prepared baking sheet, spacing them about 1 inch apart.

Bake the macaroons in the preheated oven for 12-15 minutes, or until they are lightly golden on top. Remove the macaroons from the oven and let them cool for 5 minutes. Transfer them to a wire rack to cool completely.

Enjoy your coconut macaroons!

Per 1 serving:	Energy 110 kcal	Proteins 3g	Carbohydrates 5g	Fats 9g
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Sugar-Free Homemade Chocolate

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 5 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup cocoa butter, chopped
 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
 Powdered sugar-free sweetener by taste (e.g., erythritol, stevia)
 1/4 cup powdered milk (unsweetened)
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 A pinch of salt

DIRECTIONS

In a double boiler or in a microwave, melt the cocoa butter until completely liquefied, stirring occasionally.
 Once the cocoa butter is melted, whisk in the cocoa powder, powdered sugar-free sweetener, powdered milk, and a pinch of salt. Stir continuously until the mixture is smooth and fully combined.
 Remove the mixture from heat and stir in the vanilla extract. Stir until the mixture is well blended.
 Pour the chocolate mixture into silicone molds or a parchment-lined dish. Tap the mold gently on the counter to remove any air bubbles. Place the molds in the refrigerator for about 1-2 hours, or until the chocolate is completely set and firm.
 Once the chocolate is set, remove it from the molds and break it into pieces or bars. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator. Enjoy your homemade chocolate!

Per 1 serving:	Energy 140 kcal	Proteins 2g	Carbohydrates 5g	Fats 12g
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Low-Carb Dry Fruits Snack

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

CHILL TIME: 1-2 HOURS

INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup almonds, chopped
 1/4 cup walnuts, chopped
 1/4 cup unsweetened shredded coconut
 1/4 cup flaxseeds or chia seeds
 1/4 cup dried unsweetened cranberries
 2 tablespoons almond butter (unsweetened)
 2 tablespoons coconut oil, melted
 Sugar-free sweetener by taste
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 A pinch of salt

DIRECTIONS

In a big bowl, mix the chopped almonds, walnuts, shredded coconut, flaxseeds or chia seeds, and dried cranberries.
 In another bowl, mix together the almond butter, melted coconut oil, sugar-free sweetener, vanilla extract, and a pinch of salt until smooth.
 Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients and mix well until everything is evenly combined.
 Line a small baking dish or pan with parchment paper. Press the mixture firmly into the pan, spreading it out evenly.
 Place the pan in the refrigerator for 1-2 hours. Then lift the parchment paper to take out the mixture. Cut into bars or squares.
 Enjoy immediately or store the bars in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to a week.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 180 kcal	Proteins 4g	Carbohydrates 6g	Fats 16g
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Pumpkin Spice Muffins

SERVINGS: 6

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup almond flour
 1/4 cup coconut flour
 1/2 cup canned pumpkin puree (unsweetened)
 Sugar-free sweetener by taste
 2 large eggs
 1/4 cup unsweetened almond milk
 2 tablespoons coconut oil, melted
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 1 teaspoon baking powder
 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 A pinch of salt

DIRECTIONS

Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C). Line a muffin tin with paper liners or grease with coconut oil.

In a big bowl, mix well the pumpkin puree, eggs, almond milk, melted coconut oil, and vanilla extract.

In another bowl, mix the almond flour, coconut flour, sugar-free sweetener, baking powder, pumpkin pie spice, cinnamon, and salt. Gradually add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients, mixing until a smooth batter forms.

Spoon the batter evenly into the prepared muffin tin, filling each cup about two-thirds full.

Bake in the preheated oven for 18-20 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of a muffin comes out clean. Allow the muffins to cool in the tin for a few minutes, then transfer them to a wire rack to cool completely.

Enjoy these muffins warm or at room temperature!

Per 1 serving:	Energy 120 kcal	Proteins 4g	Carbohydrates 8g	Fats 9g
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Dark Chocolate Bark

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

CHILL TIME: 1 HOUR

INGREDIENTS

1 cup sugar-free dark chocolate chips or chopped sugar-free dark chocolate
 2 tablespoons unsweetened shredded coconut
 2 tablespoons chopped nuts (e.g., almonds, walnuts, or pecans)
 1 tablespoon pumpkin or sunflower seeds
 1/4 teaspoon sea salt (optional)

DIRECTIONS

In a microwave-safe bowl, melt the dark chocolate chips or chopped dark chocolate in 30-second intervals, stirring from time to time until chocolate fully melted.

Mix together the shredded coconut, chopped nuts, and seeds in a small bowl.

Once the chocolate is melted, pour it onto a parchment-lined baking sheet. Use a spatula to spread the chocolate into an even layer, about 1/4 inch thick.

Sprinkle the coconut, nut, and seed mixture evenly over the melted chocolate. If using, lightly sprinkle sea salt over the top for an added flavor boost.

Place the baking sheet in the refrigerator for about 1 hour, or till the chocolate is fully set. Then, take it from the refrigerator and break it into pieces. Enjoy this chocolate bark as a healthy treat!

Per 1 serving:	Energy 150 kcal	Proteins 3g	Carbohydrates 8g	Fats 12g
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Berry Ice Cream

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

FRIZZING TIME: 2 HOURS

INGREDIENTS

2 cups mixed berries (such as strawberries, blueberries, raspberries), fresh or frozen
1 cup unsweetened Greek yogurt
Sugar-free sweetener by taste
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 tablespoon lemon juice (optional, for added tartness)

DIRECTIONS

If using fresh berries, rinse and pat them dry. If using frozen berries, allow them to thaw slightly.
In a blender or food processor, combine the berries, Greek yogurt, sugar-free sweetener, vanilla extract, and lemon juice (if using). Blend until smooth and creamy. Taste the mixture and adjust the sweetness or tartness by adding more sweetener or lemon juice if needed.
Pour the berry mixture into an airtight container and place it in the freezer. Let it freeze for at least 3-4 hours, or until firm.
Once frozen, scoop the berry ice cream into bowls and serve immediately. If the ice cream is too hard to scoop, let it sit at room temperature for a few minutes to soften.
Optionally, garnish with fresh berries or a sprig of mint. Enjoy this refreshing, low-carb berry ice cream!

Per 1 serving:	Energy 80 kcal	Proteins 4g	Carbohydrates 10g	Fats 2g
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Cocoa Ice Cream

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

FRIZZING TIME: 2 HOURS

INGREDIENTS

1 cup unsweetened almond milk (or any low-carb milk alternative)
1/2 cup heavy cream
1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
Sugar-free sweetener by taste (e.g., erythritol, stevia)
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
A pinch of salt

DIRECTIONS

In a medium bowl, whisk together the almond milk, heavy cream, cocoa powder, sugar-free sweetener, vanilla extract, and a pinch of salt until the cocoa powder is fully dissolved and the mixture is smooth.
Taste the mixture and adjust the sweetness by adding more sweetener.
Pour the mixture into an ice cream maker and churn according to the manufacturer's instructions. If you don't have an ice cream maker, pour the mixture into an airtight container and freeze.
If using the no-churn method, stir the mixture every 30 minutes for the first 2 hours to prevent ice crystals from forming. Freeze for at least 4 hours, or until the ice cream is firm.
Scoop the cocoa cream ice cream into bowls and serve immediately. Enjoy rich and creamy ice cream!

Per 1 serving:	Energy 120 kcal	Proteins 4g	Carbohydrates 8g	Fats 9g
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Carrot Cake

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 25 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup almond flour
 1/4 cup coconut flour
 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1 medium carrot, grated
 2 large eggs
 Sugar-free sweetener by taste
 1/4 cup unsweetened applesauce
 1/4 cup melted butter
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

DIRECTIONS

Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C) and line a small baking dish or loaf pan with parchment paper.

In a medium-sized bowl, whisk together the almond flour, coconut flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt.

In a separate bowl, whisk the eggs, sugar-free sweetener, unsweetened applesauce, coconut oil (or melted butter), and vanilla extract until smooth.

Slowly add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients, mixing until combined. Gently fold in the grated carrots and chopped walnuts (if using).

Pour the batter into the prepared baking dish and spread evenly.

Bake for 25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Let the cake cool in the pan for a few minutes. You can also top the cake with a cream cheese frosting made with sugar-free sweetener for a special touch. Enjoy!

Per 1 serving:	Energy 180 kcal	Proteins 6g	Carbohydrates 8g	Fats 14g
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Chocolate Pudding

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 cups unsweetened almond milk (or any low-carb milk alternative)
 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
 Sugar-free sweetener by taste (e.g., erythritol, stevia)
 3 tablespoons cornstarch
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 Optional: whipped cream (sugar-free) or fresh berries for garnish

DIRECTIONS

In a medium saucepan, whisk together the cocoa powder, sugar-free sweetener, cornstarch, and salt. Gradually whisk in the almond milk, ensuring there are no lumps. Continue whisking until the mixture is smooth.

Place the saucepan over medium heat and cook the mixture, stirring constantly, until it thickens and begins to boil. Once the pudding reaches a boil, reduce the heat to low and continue to cook for another 1-2 minutes, stirring constantly.

Remove the saucepan from the heat and stir in the vanilla extract. Pour the pudding into individual serving dishes. Cover with plastic wrap, pressing it directly onto the surface of the pudding to prevent a skin from forming. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours until fully chilled.

Serve the pudding cold, optionally topped with sugar-free whipped cream or fresh berries. Enjoy!

Per 1 serving:	Energy 80 kcal	Proteins 2g	Carbohydrates 10g	Fats 4g
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Poppy Seed Cheesecake

SERVINGS: 8

PREP TIME: 30 MIN

CHILL TIME: 4-5 HOURS

CRUST

1 cup almond flour
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
Sweetener (amount corresponds to 30g of amount)

FILLING

500g cream cheese
200g Greek yogurt (unsweetened, 2–5% fat)
3 large eggs
Sweetener
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
Zest of 1 lemon (optional)
4 tbsp poppy seeds (30g)

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 160°C (320°F). In a bowl, mix almond flour, melted butter, erythritol, vanilla, poppy seeds, and salt. Press mixture evenly into a springform pan (20–22 cm). Bake for 8–10 minutes until lightly golden. Let it cool.

In a large bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth. Add yogurt, erythritol, vanilla, and lemon zest. Mix until combined. Add eggs one at a time, mixing gently (don't overbeat). Stir in poppy seeds last.

Pour the filling over the cooled crust. Tap gently to release air bubbles. Bake at 160°C (320°F) for 50–60 minutes, or until the center is just set but still slightly jiggly. Turn off the oven, crack the door open, and let it cool inside for one hour.

Chill the cheesecake in the fridge for at least four hours (preferably overnight). Optionally dust lightly with powdered erythritol before serving.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 290 kcal	Proteins 11.5g	Carbohydrates 6g	Fats 21g
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Oats, Nuts, & Seeds Bars

SERVINGS: 6

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup rolled oats
1/4 cup almonds, chopped
1/4 cup walnuts, chopped
2 tablespoons chia seeds
2 tablespoons flaxseeds
1/4 cup sunflower seeds
2 tablespoons sugar-free syrup (e.g. agava)
2 tablespoons natural peanut butter or almond butter
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
A pinch of salt

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C) and line a baking dish with parchment paper.

In a large bowl, combine the rolled oats, almonds, walnuts, chia seeds, flaxseeds, and sunflower seeds. Stir in the cinnamon and salt.

In a small saucepan over low heat, melt the peanut butter and sugar-free syrup together. Stir in the vanilla extract and remove from heat once smooth. Pour the wet ingredients over the dry ingredients. Stir until all the dry ingredients are well-coated.

Press the mixture firmly into the prepared baking dish, ensuring it is evenly distributed and compact. Bake in the preheated oven for 15-20 minutes, or until the edges are golden brown.

Allow the bars to cool completely before cutting them into squares. Store in an airtight container.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 200 kcal	Proteins 6g	Carbohydrates 20g	Fats 12g
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Chapter 10. Extra Recipes

In this chapter, there is a collection of recipes for various healthy drinks, smoothies, sauces, snacks, spreads, and so on. You won't find them in any of the book's other chapters. However, these are the recipes that will enable you to infuse even the most basic and well-known foods with flavor and health benefits. You can also use these recipes to surprise your guests on festive occasions. Alternatively, you could turn them into a quick and healthful snack to bring on a party or trip.

All of the recipes are easy-to-cook, low-carb, and diabetes-friendly. They offer a great balance of high nutritional content and unique flavor. I would really like the recipes in this section to help you diversify your menu and cheer you up even on the gloomiest of days!

Sprouted Chickpeas

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN
(+ SPROUT TIME 2-3 DAYS)

COOK TIME: 0 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup dried chickpeas
Water (for soaking and rinsing)
1/2 teaspoon salt (optional)
1 tablespoon olive oil (optional, for seasoning)
1 teaspoon lemon juice (optional, for seasoning)
Fresh herbs (optional, for garnish)

DIRECTIONS

Place the dried chickpeas in a large bowl and cover with plenty of water. Let them soak for 8-12 hours or overnight.

After soaking, drain the water and rinse the chickpeas thoroughly with fresh water.

Place the rinsed chickpeas in a sprouting jar or a large bowl. Cover the jar or bowl with a clean kitchen towel or cheesecloth, securing it with a rubber band. Store the jar or bowl in a dark, cool place.

Rinse the chickpeas with fresh water 3-4 times a day, draining them well each time. Continue this process for 2-3 days until the chickpeas sprout small tails (about 1/4 to 1/2 inch long).

Once the chickpeas have sprouted, give them one final rinse and drain well.

If desired, toss the sprouted chickpeas with olive oil, lemon juice, and a pinch of salt. Garnish with fresh herbs if you like.

Enjoy the sprouted chickpeas as a snack, add them to salads, or use them as a topping for various dishes.

Sprouted chickpeas offer enhanced nutrient absorption, providing more vitamins C and B, as well as increased fiber and protein, which support stable blood sugar levels. They are also easier to digest, making them an excellent addition to a diabetes-friendly diet.

You can also use this recipe to sprout green buckwheat, lentils, or whole wheat.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 130 kcal	Proteins 3g	Carbohydrates 6g	Fats 10g
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Liver Pâté

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1/2 lb (225g) chicken livers, trimmed
 1 small onion, finely chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 tablespoon olive oil or butter
 1/4 cup unsweetened almond milk (or low-fat milk)
 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
 Salt and black pepper by taste
 1 tablespoon lemon juice

DIRECTIONS

Rinse and trim the chicken livers, removing any fat or connective tissue. Pat them dry with paper towels.

In a medium skillet, heat the olive oil or butter over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and garlic and cook for 3 minutes until softened and fragrant.

Add the chicken livers to the skillet and cook for about 7-8 minutes, stirring occasionally, until they are browned on the outside and just cooked through inside (they'll be slightly pink in the center). Stir in the dried thyme, salt, black pepper, and lemon juice. Cook for 2 minutes, then turn off the heat.

Transfer the cooked livers and onions to a blender or food processor. Add the unsweetened almond milk and blend until smooth and creamy. Spoon the mixture into a small dish. Cover and refrigerate for 1-2 hours to allow the flavors to develop.

Serve the pâté chilled. It pairs well with whole-grain crackers or toast. Liver pâté is rich in essential nutrients like iron, vitamin B12, and folate, which support energy and blood health

Per 1 serving:	Energy 160 kcal	Proteins 13g	Carbohydrates 3g	Fats 11g
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Buns with Seeds

SERVINGS: 8

PREP TIME: 75 MIN

COOK TIME: 25 MIN

INGREDIENTS

350 g whole grain wheat flour
 8 g dry yeast
 200g warm water
 40g olive oil
 1/2 tsp salt
 1 tbsp cane sugar (the sugar is consumed and transformed by yeast)
 1 tbsp sesame seeds
 1 tbsp sunflower seeds
 1 tbsp pumpkin seeds
 2 tbsp chopped walnuts

DIRECTIONS

In a medium bowl, mix water, salt, cane sugar, and olive oil. Stir until the salt and sugar are completely dissolved in water.

In another mix bowl, combine flour, dry yeast, sesame, sunflower, pumpkin seeds and walnuts. Mix well. Gradually add the dry mixture to the wet mixture, stirring constantly. Continue kneading the dough (8-10 minutes). Do not knead the dough for too long or it will become too stiff (in which case it won't rise well). If the dough sticks to your hands, add a little flour.

Cover the dough and let rise in a warm place for 45 minutes until doubled in size. Punch down the dough, divide into 8 equal buns, and place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.

Let rise again for 15 minutes, then bake at 375°F (190°C) for 25 minutes until golden brown.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 220 kcal	Proteins 7g	Carbohydrates 30g	Fats 8g
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Mushrooms Sauce

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup mushrooms, sliced
 1 small onion, finely chopped
 1/2 cup heavy cream
 1/3 cup water
 Salt and pepper to taste
 1 bay leaf
 1-2 teaspoon wheat flour
 1 tablespoon olive oil (for sautéing)

DIRECTIONS

In a medium skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the chopped onion, sauté for 3-4 minutes until softened. Add the sliced mushrooms and cook for another 5 minutes, until the mushrooms are tender and browned.

Pour the heavy cream into the skillet with the mushrooms and onions, stirring to combine. Add the bay leaf.

Gradually add the flour and water to get the thickness of the sauce to your liking, stirring constantly to prevent lumps. Continue cooking the sauce over medium heat, stirring frequently, until it thickens, about 5 minutes.

Add salt and pepper to taste, and cook for 3 minutes to blend the flavors. Take out the bay leaf.

Remove from heat and serve the mushroom sauce warm with grilled meat, or whole grain.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 130 kcal	Proteins 3g	Carbohydrates 6g	Fats 10g
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Tomato Sauce

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 large tomatoes, chopped
 1 small onion, finely chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1/4 cup fresh basil, chopped (or 1 teaspoon dried basil)
 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
 Salt and black pepper by taste
 1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar (optional, for added flavor)

DIRECTIONS

In a medium saucepan, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and minced garlic, sauté for 3-4 minutes.

Add the chopped tomatoes to the pan, stirring to combine. Let the mixture cook for 10-15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the tomatoes break down and the sauce thickens.

Stir in the fresh basil, dried oregano, salt, and black pepper. Let the sauce simmer for another 5 minutes to allow the flavors to meld. For a smoother sauce, you can use an immersion blender to blend the sauce to your desired consistency.

Taste the sauce and adjust the seasoning if needed. Stir in the balsamic vinegar if using.

Serve the tomato sauce over whole-grain pasta, zucchini noodles, or with grilled meat.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 130 kcal	Proteins 3g	Carbohydrates 6g	Fats 10g
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Mayonnaise Sauce

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 0 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 large egg (preferably pasteurized)
 1 tablespoon lemon juice or apple cider vinegar
 1/2 teaspoon Dijon mustard
 1 cup light olive oil or avocado oil
 1/4 teaspoon salt (adjust to taste)
 Pinch of pepper or other seasonings (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Add the egg, lemon juice, and Dijon mustard to a blender or a tall container for an immersion blender.
 Blend for about 10 seconds to combine.
 Slowly drizzle in the oil while blending continuously, starting very slowly at first to allow the mixture to emulsify.
 Once all the oil is incorporated and the mayonnaise has thickened, season with salt and pepper to taste.
 Blend one more time briefly to ensure everything is well combined.
 Transfer to an airtight container and store in the refrigerator for up to one week.
 Cooking your own homemade diabetes-friendly mayonnaise allows you to control the ingredients and avoid added sugars or preservatives.
 You may use it as a dip for raw vegetables, like carrots, cucumbers, celery, or bell peppers.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 180 kcal	Proteins 1g	Carbohydrates 0g	Fats 20g
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Garlic Spread

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 0 MIN

INGREDIENTS

4 oz soft goat cheese
 2 boiled eggs, finely chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 2 tablespoons low-fat mayonnaise or sour cream
 1/4 teaspoon salt (adjust to taste)
 Fresh dill, chopped (optional)

DIRECTIONS

In a medium bowl, combine the soft goat cheese and finely chopped boiled eggs.
 Add the minced garlic, low-fat mayonnaise or sour cream, and salt to the mixture.
 Stir in the fresh dill (if using) until all ingredients are well mixed.
 Adjust seasoning if necessary, adding more salt or dill to taste.
 Transfer the spread to a serving dish and refrigerate for at least 15 minutes to let the flavors meld.
 Serve with whole-grain crackers, fresh vegetables, or as a spread on whole-grain bread.
 This spread is low in carbohydrates, satisfying, and highly nutritional. You can bring it to work or on a trip, and you can have it for breakfast or as a snack.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 130 kcal	Proteins 8g	Carbohydrates 2g	Fats 10g
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Green Smoothie

SERVINGS: 2

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 0 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup fresh spinach
1/2 cup kale, chopped
1/2 avocado, peeled and pitted
1/2 green apple, chopped
1/2 cucumber, chopped
1 tablespoon chia seeds
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1 cup unsweetened almond milk
Ice cubes (optional, for a colder smoothie)

DIRECTIONS

Wash and chop the spinach, kale, green apple, and cucumber. Place the spinach, kale, avocado, green apple, cucumber, chia seeds, and lemon juice in a blender. Pour in the unsweetened almond milk. Blend the ingredients on high speed until smooth and creamy. Add ice cubes if you prefer a colder smoothie. If the smoothie is too thick, add more almond milk to reach your desired consistency. Pour the smoothie into two glasses and serve immediately. Enjoy this refreshing and nutritious green smoothie as a quick breakfast or snack.

Per 1 serving:

Energy 120 kcal

Proteins 3g

Carbohydrates 12g

Fats 8g

Berry Smoothie

SERVINGS: 2

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 0 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup mixed berries (such as strawberries, blueberries, raspberries), fresh or frozen
1/2 cup unsweetened Greek yogurt
1/2 cup unsweetened almond milk (or any low-carb milk alternative)
1 tablespoon chia seeds
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon (optional)
Ice cubes (optional, for a thicker consistency)

DIRECTIONS

Gather all the ingredients. If using fresh berries, rinse them well. If using frozen berries, you can use them directly from the freezer. In a blender, combine the mixed berries, Greek yogurt, almond milk, chia seeds, vanilla extract, and cinnamon (if using). Add ice cubes if you prefer a thicker smoothie. Blend the ingredients on high speed until the mixture is smooth and creamy, about 1-2 minutes. Taste the smoothie and adjust sweetness or flavor if needed. You can add more almond milk for a thinner consistency or more berries for a stronger flavor. Pour the smoothie into glasses and serve immediately. Using low-glycemic berries in smoothie provides natural sweetness and essential nutrients.

Per 1 serving:

Energy 120 kcal

Proteins 6g

Carbohydrates 15g

Fats 4g

Green Sauce

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 0 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 cups fresh basil leaves, packed
 1/4 cup pine nuts or walnuts
 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
 2 cloves garlic
 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Wash the basil leaves and peel the garlic.
 In a food processor or blender, combine the basil, pine nuts (or walnuts), Parmesan cheese, and garlic. Pulse until finely chopped.
 With the food processor running, slowly drizzle in the olive oil until the mixture is smooth and creamy.
 Stir in the lemon juice and season with salt and pepper to taste. Blend again for a few seconds to combine.
 If the green sauce is too thick, you can add a small amount of water or additional olive oil to reach your desired consistency.
 Use the green pesto immediately as a sauce for vegetables, grilled meats, or whole-grain pasta.
 Store any leftover sauce in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to a week.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 160 kcal	Proteins 4g	Carbohydrates 3g	Fats 15g
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Béchamel Sauce

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons whole-grain wheat flour
 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
 1 1/2 cups low-fat milk
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
 A pinch of ground nutmeg (optional)

DIRECTIONS

In a medium saucepan, melt the unsalted butter over medium heat. Once the butter is melted, whisk in the whole-grain wheat flour. Cook for 1-2 minutes, stirring constantly, to form a roux.
 Slowly pour in the low-fat milk, continuing to whisk to prevent lumps from forming. Stir continuously as the mixture begins to thicken, about 5-7 minutes.
 Add the salt, black pepper, and a pinch of nutmeg (if using) to the sauce. Whisk until fully combined.
 Lower the heat and let the sauce simmer for an additional 2-3 minutes, stirring occasionally, until it reaches the desired consistency.
 Taste the béchamel sauce and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Use the sauce immediately in your favorite recipes or store it in an airtight container for up to 2 days in the refrigerator.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 100 kcal	Proteins 3g	Carbohydrates 7g	Fats 6g
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Almond Milk

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 0 MIN
SOAK TIME: 8 HOURS

INGREDIENTS

1 cup (5.3 oz) raw almonds
4 cups water
1 teaspoon vanilla extract (optional)
1-2 tablespoons sugar-free sweetener or syrup (optional, adjust by taste)
Pinch of salt (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Soak the almonds in water for at least 8 hours or overnight. Drain and rinse the almonds.
Add the soaked almonds and 4 cups of fresh water to a blender. Blend on high for 2-3 minutes.
Strain the almond mixture through a nut milk bag or cheesecloth into a large bowl, squeezing out as much liquid as possible.
If desired, add vanilla extract, maple syrup, and a pinch of salt to the almond milk. Stir well.
Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 4 days. Shake well before using.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 43 kcal	Proteins 2g	Carbohydrates 2g	Fats 4g
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Rye Bread

SERVINGS: 6

PREP TIME: 15 MIN
(+ RISING TIME)

COOK TIME: 35 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup rye flour
1 cup whole-grain wheat flour
1 teaspoon active dry yeast
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon stevia or another low-carb sweetener
3/4 cup warm water
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
1 tablespoon flaxseeds (optional)

DIRECTIONS

In a small bowl, mix the warm water, yeast, and stevia. Let it sit for 5 minutes until the yeast activates and bubbles.
In a large bowl, combine the rye flour, whole wheat flour, and salt. Add the yeast mixture, olive oil, and apple cider vinegar to the dry ingredients. Stir until a dough forms.
Knead the dough on a floured surface for about 5 minutes until smooth and elastic. Optionally, mix in the flaxseeds.
Place the dough in a lightly greased bowl, cover it with a clean towel, and let it rise for 1 hour in a warm place.
Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C). Shape the dough into a loaf and place it on a parchment-lined baking sheet.
Bake for 30-35 minutes, or until the bread is golden brown.
Allow the bread to cool in the oven for a few minutes, then transfer it to a wire rack to cool completely.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 120 kcal	Proteins 4g	Carbohydrates 23g	Fats 2g
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Bolognese Sauce

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 60 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 lb (450g) lean ground beef or turkey
 1 small onion, finely chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 medium carrot, finely chopped
 1 can (14 oz) crushed tomatoes, no added sugar
 1/4 cup tomato paste, no added sugar
 1/2 cup low-sodium meat broth or water
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 teaspoon dried oregano
 1 teaspoon dried basil
 Salt and black pepper by taste
 Fresh parsley, chopped (for garnish)

DIRECTIONS

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and carrot. Sauté for 5-7 minutes until the vegetables are softened.
 Add the ground beef or turkey to the skillet. Cook, breaking it up with a spoon, until browned all over, about 7-10 minutes.
 Stir in the minced garlic, dried oregano, and dried basil. Cook for 1-2 minutes until fragrant.
 Add the crushed tomatoes, tomato paste, and low-sodium broth to the skillet. Stir well to combine.
 Reduce the heat to low and let the sauce simmer gently for about 30-40 minutes, stirring occasionally, until it thickens. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
 Serve the Bolognese sauce over whole-grain pasta, zucchini noodles, or as a topping for stuffed vegetables. Garnish with fresh parsley if desired.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 250 kcal	Proteins 10g	Carbohydrates 20g	Fats 14g
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Cottage Cheese Spread

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 0 MIN

INGREDIENTS

1 cup dry curd cottage cheese or farmer's cheese
 1/4 cup sundried tomatoes (in oil), chopped
 2 tablespoons fresh basil, chopped
 Salt by taste
 2 tablespoons sour cream (light or low-fat)

DIRECTIONS

Chop the sundried tomatoes and fresh basil. In a medium bowl, combine the dry curd cottage cheese or farmer's cheese with the sour cream. Mix until smooth and creamy.
 Stir in the chopped sundried tomatoes, fresh basil, and salt. Mix until all ingredients are well combined. If the mixture is too thick, you can add a bit more sour cream to reach your desired consistency.
 For best flavor, refrigerate the spread for at least 30 minutes to let the flavors meld together. Serve the cottage cheese spread with whole-grain crackers or cucumber slices, or spread it on toast.
 Keep the spread in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 100 kcal	Proteins 10g	Carbohydrates 4g	Fats 5g
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Low-Carb Salami Pizza

SERVINGS: 6

PREP TIME: 25 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

2 medium zucchinis (about 300g),
grated
2 large eggs
50g whole grain wheat flour
1/4 tsp oregano or Italian
seasoning
60 g dry salami (choose lean or
reduced-fat if possible), thinly
sliced
1 medium tomato, spliced
80g fresh mozzarella, sliced
5–6 fresh basil leaves
1 tsp olive oil (for topping)
Salt & pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 200°C (390°F). Line a baking tray with parchment paper.
Grate zucchini and a 1/4 teaspoon of salt and set aside for 15 minutes. After that, squeeze out excess moisture using a clean towel or cheesecloth. In a bowl, mix grated zucchini, eggs, whole grain flour, a pinch of salt, and seasonings until well combined.
Spread the mixture into a round crust (about 5 mm thick) on the parchment paper. Spread dry salami and mozzarella slices evenly over the base. Arrange tomato slices on top. Add a drizzle of olive oil and sprinkle with pepper.
Place the pizza in the oven, bake for 15–18 until set and lightly golden.
Top with fresh basil leaves before serving. Let rest for five minutes before slicing.

Per 1 serving:	Energy 111 kcal	Proteins 6.5g	Carbohydrates 6.3g	Fats 6.6g
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Nut Sauce

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 0 MIN

INGREDIENTS

3 tablespoons unsweetened
peanut butter (48 g)
1 tablespoon chopped roasted
peanuts (10 g)
1 tablespoon soy sauce (15 ml,
low sodium)
1 tablespoon rice vinegar or lime
juice (15 ml)
1 teaspoon sesame oil (5 g)
1 teaspoon tahini (5 g)
3–4 tablespoon warm water (to
thin to desired consistency)

DIRECTIONS

In a small bowl, whisk together peanut butter, soy sauce, vinegar (or lime juice), tahini, and sesame oil.
Add warm water gradually until the sauce reaches a smooth, pourable consistency.
Stir in the chopped roasted peanuts for texture.
Serve as a dip or dressing, or drizzle over vegetables and lean meats.
The sauce is excellent with wakame seaweed salad!

Per 1 serving:	Energy 133 kcal	Proteins 5g	Carbohydrates 6g	Fats 10g
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Chapter 11. Meal Plans

A meal plan is a handy tool for planning your menu for the week. After all, it is very difficult to keep in mind the possible options for breakfasts, lunches, dinners, and snacks, as well as the ingredients needed for them. Therefore, it is better to make a list of your favorite dishes in the form of a convenient table for each day, and then write a list of the necessary ingredients and go to the store to buy groceries for the coming week. In this section, I offer you some examples of one-week meal plan for different cases: weight control, busy days, eating out, festive days.

Meal plans are designed for two people. For convenience and to save time on cooking, some dishes are prepared for two days – the first half can be eaten immediately, and the second half should be refrigerated and reheated the next day. That is why some dishes are duplicated on the menu. If a dish on the menu is duplicated, it means that it is prepared for four servings. This usually applies to cereals, meat, fish, and some vegetable dishes, as well as desserts and snacks.

Breakfasts and salads should not be prepared in advance so that they do not lose their nutritional qualities and flavor. In general, these dishes are prepared for two servings. There are exceptions: for example, if you're making muffins, pancakes, or a pie, you can also make these dishes for four servings. Servings are approximate and may need to be adjusted depending on your age, physical and mental activity, weight, metabolic rate, and other factors.

Each meal plan is followed by a list of foods needed to prepare these meals and their approximate quantities. For convenience, the list of foods is divided into two parts. The first part consists of long-term storage products that are usually available in every kitchen, such as vegetable oils, salt, spices, cereals, sweeteners, and similar products. These products are common to all meal plans and will be listed below in the Table 4. The second part is products with a short shelf life, such as dairy products, fruits, vegetables, eggs, and others. This list of products will need to be purchased just before the start of the week. The list of these products is given under the corresponding menu of the week.

So, before you go to the store, you will need to review the first list and your stocks of these products in the kitchen. If you have already run out of cereals, spices, or canned goods or are almost out of them, you will need to add them to the second list and then go to the store.

Table 4. List of Long-term storage products

Olive oil	Buckwheat (1.5 lb)	Canned chickpeas (2-3 cans)
Sesame oil, sunflower oil	Barley (1.5 lb)	Canned beans (2-3 cans)
Salt	Millet (1.5 lb)	Almonds, cashews
Dried oregano, basil	Whole-grain pasta (1.5 lb)	Walnuts, hazelnuts
Dried thyme, rosemary	Brown rice (1.5 lb)	Flaxseeds, chia seeds
Bay leaf	Red lentil pasta (1 lb)	Sunflower, sesame seeds
Garlic, curry powder	Steel-cut oats (1.5 lb)	Apple cider vinegar
Red pepper flakes	Dry green split peas (1 lb)	Red wine, balsamic vinegar
Black pepper, cayenne pepper	Dry chickpeas (1 lb)	Soy sauce
Turmeric	Dry white, black beans (1 lb)	Mustard, dijon mustard
Coriander	Red lentil (1 lb)	Sundried tomatoes (2 cans)
Cocoa powder (8 oz)	Low-carb granola (1 lb)	Diced tomatoes (2-3 cans)
Vanilla extract	Coconut flour (1 lb)	Crashed tomatoes (1-2 cans)
Smoked paprika	Almond flour (1 lb)	Tomato paste (small can)
Anis, clove	Whole-grain wheat flour (1.5 lb)	Protein powder (small can)
Cinnamon (ground, sticks)	Whole-grain rye flour (2 lb)	Coconut milk (1-2 cans)
Nutmeg	Peanut, almond butter (1-2 cans)	Sliced Almonds, Coconut flakes
Baking powder (8 oz)	Tahini (small can)	Sugar-free dries cranberries
Dry yeast	Honey (small jar)	Sugar-free sweetener

Weight Control Meal Plan #1

	Breakfast	Lunch	Snack	Dinner
Sun	Zucchini Omelet (p.27), Fresh Apple	Quick & Yummy Chicken Nuggets (p.46), Millet (p. 40) Fresh Cucumber	Fruit Salad (p. 92)	Chickpea & Spinach Stew (p.67)
Mon	Quick Green Wrap (p.23), Dark Chocolate (2 oz)	Quick & Yummy Chicken Nuggets (p.46), Millet (p. 40), Fresh Tomato	Liver Pâté (p. 101) with Whole-Grain Toast	Lentil & Vegetable Soup (p. 71)
Tue	Baked Eggs with Ham & Tomatoes (p.27), Fresh Apple	Lentil & Vegetable Soup (p.71) Whole-Grain Toast	Cottage Cheese Spread (p.100), Whole-Grain Toast	Arugula Salad (p.38), Liver Pâté (p. 101) with Rye Bread (p.104)
Wed	Quinoa Breakfast Bowls (p. 26), Fresh Peach	Salmon Soup (p.65), Rye Bread (p.104)	Cottage Cheese Spread (p.100), Rye Bread (p.104)	Salmon Soup (p.65), Fresh Cucumber
Thu	Avocado Toast (p.24), Fresh Cucumber	Buckwheat Soup with Meatballs (p. 55), Rye Bread (p. 104)	Mint & Ginger Hot Tea (p. 99), Dark Chocolate (2 oz)	Boiled Steel-Cut Oat (p.40), Goat Cheese (2 oz), Tomato Salad (p. 31)
Fri	Boiled Steel-Cut Oat (p.40), Avocado (1 medium), Fresh Cucumber	Buckwheat Soup with Meatballs (p. 55), Whole-Grain Cracker	Berries Hot Tea (p. 99), Dark Chocolate (2 oz)	Seaweed Salad (p.66), Grilled Chicken Breast (p.47), Whole-Grain Cracker
Sat	Quick Green Wrap (p.23), Dark Chocolate (2 oz)	Tuna Salad (p.37), Barley (p.43)	Green Smoothie (p.98)	Barley (p.43), Grilled Chicken Breast (p.47), Fresh Bell Pepper

Table 5. List of Short-Term Products for Meal Plan

Eggs (8 pcs)	Zucchini (2-3 small)	Fresh dill (1 cup)
Parmesan (2 oz)	Onion (6-8 small)	Fresh ginger (1 medium)
Low-fat milk (4 oz)	Red onion (1 medium)	Fresh mint (1 cup)
Sour cream (9 oz)	Carrot (4 pcs)	Avocado (3-4 medium)
Feta cheese (1 oz)	Arugula (5 cups)	Spinach tortillas (4-5 pcs)
Greek yogurt (1/2 cup)	Iceberg (1 cup +1/2 cup)	Whole-grain bread (6-8 pcs)
Cottage cheese (8 oz)	Spinach (7 cups)	Whole-grain crackers (4-6 pcs)
Almond milk (8 oz)	Cucumber (5-6 medium)	Apples (6-7 medium)
Goat cheese (4 oz)	Celery root (1 small)	Green Apple (1 big)
Chicken breasts (6 pcs)	Bell pepper (5 medium)	Peaches (4 small)
Salmon fillet (8 oz)	Cherry tomatoes (20 pcs)	Lemon (7 small)
Lean ground beef (1/2 lb)	Kale (1 cup)	Fresh or frozen berries (2cups)
Chicken livers (1/2 lb)	Fresh basil (2 cups)	Kiwi (1 small)
Ham (12 slices)	Fresh parsley (2 cups)	Orange (1 small)
Dried seaweed (1/2 cup)	Garlic (2-3 pcs)	Dill pickles (1 small can)
Green onion (3-4 medium)	Fresh tomatoes (10 medium)	Sugar-free dark chocolate (8 oz)
Celery stalk (5 pcs)	Potato (2 medium)	

Weight-Control Meal Plan #2

	Breakfast	Lunch	Snack	Dinner
Sun	Broccoli with Parmesan (p.28), Low-Fat Greek Yogurt (8 oz)	Ratatouille (p.82), Turkey Meatballs (p.48)	Apple Baked with Farmer's Cheese (p.93)	Buckwheat (p.41), Ratatouille (p. 82)
Mon	Zucchini Pancakes (p.80), Sour Cream (2 tbsp), Fresh Peach	Gazpacho (p.78), Turkey Meatballs (p.48)	Berry Parfait (p.87), Cashew (1 oz)	Buckwheat (p.41), Bolognese Sauce (p. 100), Zucchini Pancakes (p.80)
Tue	Cottage Cheese with Flax Seeds (like p.23), Fresh Peach, Whole Grain Cracker	Whole-Grain Pasta (3 oz), Bolognese Sauce (p.100), Fresh Cucumber	Berry Parfait (p.87), Cashew (1 oz)	Caesar Salad with Chicken (p.31), Whole-Grain Toast
Wed	Smoothie Bowl (p.22), Fresh Plum	Chicken Stir-Fry (p.48), Whole-Grain Pasta (3 oz)	Berry Ice Cream (p.91), Almond (1 oz)	Vegetable Stew with Mushrooms (p. 79), Rye Bread (p.104)
Thu	Tofu Scramble (p.29), Rye Bread (p.104)	Sweet Potato Hash (p. 80), Beef Stewed with Vegetables (p.51)	Berry Ice Cream (p.91), Almond (1 oz)	Chicken Stir-Fry (p. 48), Rye Bread (p.104)
Fri	Spinach Omelet (p.24), Rye Bread (p.104) Fresh Apple	Brown Rice (p. 42), Beef Stewed with Vegetables (p.51)	Carrot Slices, Hummus (p.68)	Sweet Potato Hash (p.80), Pork Tenderloin (p.49)
Sat	Cauliflower with Eggs, (p.28), Quinoa (p. 43)	Red Lentil Carry (p. 68), Whole-Grain Toast	Carrot Slices, Hummus (p.68)	Quinoa Salad (p.34)

Table 6. List of short-term products for the meal plan

Cottage cheese (12 oz)	Broccoli (2 large head)	Eggplant (1 medium)
Parmesan (6 oz)	Garlic (3-4 pcs)	Tomatoes (4-5 medium)
Low-fat Greek yogurt (2 cups)	Fresh spinach (4 cups)	Snap peas (1 cup)
Sour cream (4 oz)	Fresh or frozen berries (4 cups)	Zucchini (3 medium)
Feta cheese (2 oz)	Carrot (8-10 medium)	Celery stacks (4 medium)
Low-fat milk (4 oz)	Onion (8 medium)	Yellow squash (1 medium)
Unsalted butter (4 oz)	Bell pepper (8 medium)	Fresh ginger (1 medium root)
Almond milk (16 oz)	Cauliflower (1 large head)	Green beans (1 cup)
Coconut milk (13.5 oz)	Fresh parsley (1 cup)	Banana (1 medium)
Eggs (10 pcs)	Fresh basil (1 cup)	Fresh apples (4 medium)
Lean beef (1 lb)	Fresh cilantro (1 cup)	Fresh plums (3-4 pcs)
Pork tenderloin (1 lb)	Fresh mint (1 cup)	Fresh peaches (4 pcs)
Lean ground turkey (2 lb)	Red onion (2 medium)	Vegetable juice (2 cups)
Chicken breast (1 lb + 1/2 lb)	Sweet potato (2 medium)	Whole-grain toast bread (6 pcs)
Worcestershire sauce (1 small can)	Romaine lettuce (1 small head)	Whole-grain crackers (4-6 pcs)
Lemon (3-4 medium)	Mushrooms (4 oz)	
Avocado (1 small)	Cucumber (5-6 medium)	

Festive-Days Meal Plan

	Breakfast	Lunch	Snack	Dinner
Sun	Low-Carb Pancakes (p.25), Sour Cream (2 tbs), Fresh Peach	Pasta with Shrimps & Tomatoes (p.45)	Chocolate Pudding (p.88), Dark Chocolate (1 oz)	Beef Steak with Asparagus (p.53)
Mon	Breakfast Burrito (p.25), Fresh Peach	Pasta with Shrimps & Tomatoes (p.45)	Mint & Ginger Hot Tea (p.99), Low-Carb Pancakes (p.25)	Grilled Salmon (p.58), Grilled Vegetables (p.79)
Tue	Almond Muffins (p.26), Greek Yogurt (8 oz), Fresh Berries	Coconut Carry Shrimp (p.61), Quinoa (p.43), Cherry Tomatoes	Mint & Ginger Hot Tea (p.99), Sesame Cookies (p.86)	Baked Cod with Vegetables (p.63), Whole-Grain Bread
Wed	Tuna Toast (p.29), Fresh Apple	Baked Cod with Vegetables (p.63), Whole-Grain Bread	Chocolate Pudding (p.88), Sesame Cookies (p.86)	Coconut Carry Shrimp (p.61), Quinoa (p.43), Cherry Tomatoes
Thu	Almond Muffins (p.26), Greek Yogurt (8 oz), Fresh Apricot	Baked Dorado (p.58), Brown Rice (p.42), Bechamel Sauce (p.102)	Cocoa Ice Cream (p.91)	Eggplant Stir-Fry (p.78), Brown Rice (p.42)
Fri	Apples Baked with Farmer's Cheese (p.93)	Mushroom Barley Soup (p.76)	Whole-Grain Toast with Garlic Spread (p.103)	Baked Dorado (p.58), Bechamel Sauce (p.102), Fresh Tomatoes
Sat	Breakfast Burrito (p.25), Dark Chocolate	Baked Eggplants (p.83), Grilled Chicken Breast (p.47)	Cocoa Ice Cream (p.91), Dark Chocolate (1 oz)	Grilled Chicken Breast (p.47), Mediterranean Salad (p.33)

Table 7. List of short-term products for the meal plan

Sour cream (4 oz)	Low-carb tortilla (4 pcs)	Eggplants (4 medium)
Parmesan (2 oz)	Whole-grain toast bread (8-10 pcs)	Tomatoes (4 medium)
Low-fat Greek yogurt (2 cups)	Fresh spinach (1 cup)	Celery stalks (2 pcs)
Mozzarella (3 oz)	Fresh dill (1 cup)	Fresh ginger (3 medium roots)
Cottage cheese (2 oz)	Fresh parsley (2 cups)	Fresh peaches (2 pcs)
Almond milk (32 oz)	Green onion (2-3 pcs)	Fresh berries (2 cups)
Coconut milk (1 can, about 14 oz)	Fresh mint (1 cup)	Fresh apples (4 medium)
Heavy cream (8 oz)	Fresh cilantro (1 cup)	Fresh apricots (6-8 medium)
Unsalted butter (4 oz)	Onion (5 medium)	Lime (1 small)
Low-fat milk (1+1/2 cups)	Red onion (1 small)	Lemon (8 pcs)
Soft goat cheese (2 oz)	Avocado (1 medium)	Salsa (1 small can)
Eggs (16 pcs)	Bell pepper (4 medium)	Cornstarch (3 tbs)
Chicken Breast (4 pcs)	Cherry tomatoes (40 oz)	Tuna (2 cans, 6 oz each)
Dorado (4 pcs, 1 lb each)	Cucumber (2 medium)	Mushrooms (4 oz)
Salmon Fillets (2 pcs, 6 oz each)	Carrot (4 medium)	Coconut oil (6 oz)
Cod Fillets (4 pcs, 6 oz each)	Asparagus (1 lb)	Sugar-free dark chocolate (4oz)
Shrimps (2 lb)	Zucchini (1 medium)	
Beef Steaks (2 pcs, 6 oz each)	Garlic (2 pcs)	

Busy-Days Meal Plan

	Breakfast	Lunch	Snack	Dinner
Sun	Cottage Cheese with Fruit (p.23), Cashew (1 oz)	Salad with Shrimp & Avocado (p.33), Rye Bread	Whole-Grain Bread, Garlic Spread (p.103)	Easy Chicken Thighs (p.50), Easy Cabbage Salad (p.38), Whole-Grain Bread
Mon	Zucchini Omelet (p.27), Fresh Apple	Tuna Salad (p.37), Rye Bread	Almond Brownies (p. 86)	Barley in Slow Cooker (p.43), Easy Chicken Thighs (p.50)
Tue	Baked Eggs with Ham & Tomato (p.27), Fresh Pear	Steel-Cut Oat (p.39), Fresh Tomatoes, Avocado (1 small), Mozzarella (2 oz)	Almond Brownies (p.86)	Chicken Thighs with Mustard Sauce (p.49), Steel-Cut Oat (p.39), Fresh Radish
Wed	Brown Rice (p.42), Chicken Thighs with Mustard Sauce (p.49), Fresh Tomatoes	Chicken Soup (p.54), Rye Bread with Butter	Greek Yogurt (8 oz) with Berries	Brown Rice (p. 42), Arugula Salad (p.38), Avocado (1 small)
Thu	Shakshuka (p.21), Fresh Apricots	Chicken Soup (p.54), Rye Bread with Cottage Cheese Spread (p.100)	Low-Carb Muffins in Microwave Oven (p.94)	Buckwheat (p.41), Baked Cod with Tomato & Basil (p.59)
Fri	Tuna Toast (p.29), Fresh Berries	Buckwheat (p.41), Baked Cod with Tomato & Basil (p.59)	Whole-Grain Toast with Cottage Cheese Spread (p.100)	Whole-Grain Pasta (3oz), Garlic Herb Chicken Drumsticks (p.50), Fresh Tomato
Sat	Whole-Grain Pasta (3oz) with Pesto, Avocado (1 small), Fresh Bell Pepper	Garlic Herb Chicken Drumsticks (p.50), Easy Cabbage Salad (p.38)	Berries Smoothie (p.98), Whole-Grain Bread with Peanut Butter	Hake Stewed with Vegetables (p.61), Whole-Grain Toast with Garlic Butter (p.101)

Table 8. List of short-term products for the meal plan

Cottage cheese (16 oz)	Zucchini (2 medium)	Fresh radish (8 small)
Eggs (12 pcs)	Onion (5 small)	Green cabbage (1 small head)
Parmesan (4 oz)	Fresh parsley (2 cups)	Fresh basil (2 cup)
Low-fat milk (1/4 cup)	Green onion (2-3 medium)	Cashew (2 oz)
Cheddar (2 oz)	Garlic (3 pcs or 16 cloves)	Fresh pears (2 medium)
Unsalted butter (12 oz)	Tomatoes (12 medium)	Fresh apricots (4 medium)
Greek yogurt (2 cups)	Bell peppers (4-5 medium)	Fresh berries (2 cups)
Sour cream (1 cup)	Fresh dill (1 cup)	Fresh peaches (2 medium)
Mozzarella (2 oz)	Avocado (4 medium)	Fresh apples (2 medium)
Soft goat cheese (2 oz)	Fresh spinach (2 cups)	Sundried tomatoes (1 small can)
Almond milk (8 oz)	Fresh arugula (4 cups)	Tuna (3 cans, 5 oz each)
Chicken breasts (1 lb)	Cherry tomatoes (4 cups)	Pesto (1 small can)
Chicken drumsticks (8 pcs)	Lemon (5 small)	Dill pickles (1 small can)
Chicken thighs (2 lb)	Celery stalk (2 medium)	Rye bread (10 pcs)
Cod fillets (4 pcs, 6 oz each)	Red onion (2 small)	Whole-grain toasts (12 pcs)
Hake fillets (3 pcs, 6 oz each)	Carrot (4-5 medium)	
Ham (4 slices)	Green peas (1 cup)	
Large shrimps (8 oz)	Potatoes (3-4 medium)	

Eating-Out Meal Plan

	Breakfast	Lunch	Snack	Dinner
Sun	Quick Green Wrap (p.23)	Whole-Grain Toast with Peanut Butter, 2 Boiled Eggs, Fresh Tomatoes	Cheesecake (p.95)	Quick Green Wrap (p.23)
Mon	Smoothie Bowl (p.22)	Brown Rice & Salmon Bowl (p.65)	Cheesecake (p.95)	Grilled Salmon (p.58), Fresh Cucumber, Whole-Grain Bread
Tue	Zucchini Pancakes (p.80), Sour Cream (2 tbsp), Fresh Berries	Brown Rice & Salmon Bowl (p.65)	Oats, Nuts & Seeds Bar (p.92)	Quick & Yummy Chicken Nuggets (p.46), Baked Brussels Sprouts (p.81)
Wed	Veggie Omelet (p.22), Fresh Apple	Quinoa Breakfast Bowl (p.26)	Oats, Nuts & Seeds Bar (p.92)	Quick & Yummy Chicken Nuggets (p.46), Fresh Tomatoes, Rye Bread (p.104)
Thu	Almond Muffins (p.26), Fresh Plums	Fish Cakes (p.63), Fresh Bell Pepper	Carrot Cake (p.94)	Fish Cakes (p.63), Fresh Bell Pepper
Fri	Cottage Cheese with Fruit (p.23), Nuts (2 oz)	Brown Rice with Vegetables (p.42), Avocado	Carrot Cake (p.94)	Seared Tuna Steak (p.60), Rye Bread (p.104), Fresh Radish
Sat	Low-Carb Pancakes (p.25), Sour Cream (2 tbsp), Fresh Peach	Sprouted Chickpeas (p.96), Whole-Grain Toast with Parmesan (2 oz), Fresh Tomato	Dark Chocolate-Covered Almonds (p. 87)	Seared Tuna Steak (p.60), Rye Bread (p.104), Fresh Tomato

Table 9. List of Short-Term Products for Meal Plan

Unsalted butter (4 oz)	Garlic (1 medium)	Broccoli (1 small head)
Parmesan (5 oz)	Fresh dill (1/2 cup)	Tomatoes (12 medium)
Cream cheese (16 oz)	Fresh spinach (2 cups)	Zucchini (6 medium)
Sour cream (10 oz)	Fresh berries (2 cups)	Brussels sprouts (10 oz)
Feta cheese (1 oz)	Avocado (4 medium)	Lemon (7 small)
Cottage cheese (8 oz)	Onion (3 medium)	Spinach tortillas (2 pcs)
Almond milk (12 oz)	Fresh radish (8 small)	Whole-grain toast bread (8 pcs)
Eggs (16 pcs)	Bell pepper (6 medium)	Fresh peaches (4-5 medium)
Ham (4 slices)	Fresh basil (1 cup)	Fresh apples (2 medium)
Mushrooms (2 oz)	Fresh parsley (2 cups)	Cashew (4 oz)
Salmon fillets (4 pcs, 6 oz each)	Fresh cilantro (1 cup)	Fresh plums (2 medium)
Canned salmon (16 oz)	Iceberg lettuce (1 cup)	Almond (6 oz)
Chicken breasts (4 pcs, 9 oz each)	Fresh arugula (1 cup)	Walnuts (1 oz)
Tuna steaks (4 pcs, 6 oz each)	Cherry tomatoes (6 oz)	Applesauce (1/4 cup)
	Cucumber (3 medium)	Sugar-free dark chocolate (3 oz)

Table of Measurements

Measurement	Equivalent
1 tablespoon (tbsp)	3 teaspoons (tsp)
1/4 cup	4 tablespoons (tbsp)
1/3 cup	5 tablespoons + 1 teaspoon
1/2 cup	8 tablespoons (tbsp)
2/3 cup	10 tablespoons + 2 teaspoons
3/4 cup	12 tablespoons (tbsp)
1 cup	16 tablespoons (tbsp)
1 fluid ounce (fl oz)	2 tablespoons (tbsp)
1 pint (pt)	2 cups (16 fl oz)
1 quart (qt)	4 cups (2 pints or 32 fl oz)
1 gallon (gal)	16 cups (4 quarts or 128 fl oz)
1 ounce (oz)	28.35 grams (g)
1 pound (lb)	16 ounces (oz) or 453.6 grams (g)
1 stick of butter	1/2 cup or 8 tablespoons (tbsp) or 4 ounces (oz)
1 cup liquid	240 milliliters (ml)
1 teaspoon (tsp)	5 milliliters (ml)
1 tablespoon	15 milliliters (ml)

Conclusion

My greatest hope is to assist and support everyone who has ever struggled with diabetes. While reading this book, I hope everyone finds helpful hints and intriguing recipes that will slightly ease their life as a diabetic. I have firsthand experience with how hard it is to resist the numerous temptations of modern life, where store shelves are adorned with eye-catching, colorful packages of chips, ice cream, crackers, cookies, muffins, and other sweet treats. I am aware that you will have depressing and exhausting periods throughout your life due to your diabetes, self-imposed restrictions, continuous thoughts of counting carbohydrates, and frequent testing of your blood sugar, which sometimes will still go beyond the normal range for unknown reasons.

Yes, it's true that having diabetes is difficult; receiving a diagnosis causes significant life adjustments. However, keep in mind that things do change, usually for the better. With time, the restrictions brought on by diabetes become positive habits; an individual merely gets used to organizing their meals and learning to select food that is not only delicious but also healthful.

Although there is no cure for this illness, it is still possible to "negotiate" with it and lead a long, fulfilling life.

Yes, diabetes can be dangerous because of its complications. However, they only appear when a person disregards the diagnosis, dietary advice, and medical advice in its entirety.

It is crucial in my opinion that no one who has diabetes gives up but instead realizes how varied a diet for a person with diabetes may truly be after reading this book. Take care of your body, eat a healthy diet, adhere to your doctor's advice, and be thankful that you are not alone in this amazing modern world despite having diabetes: use the newest glucometers or daily glucose monitoring systems, take modern medications to lower your blood sugar levels, locate an offline or online support group for people with diabetes, and make an effort to find the positive aspects of your unique physical condition and share them with others!

Scientists are always working to improve the comfort and convenience of life for those with diabetes; they are not standing still. We can even assume that diabetes will eventually be curable. However, I hope that you will always maintain your good eating habits!

**Keep going! I am always here for you, and I completely understand you!
Everything will come together!**