Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)
If you have a question, compliment, comment or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or whh-tr.whitthealthPALS@nhs.net

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please contact us on 020 7288 3182. We will try our best to meet your needs.

How to choose from the hospital menu if you have diabetes

A patient’s guide
If you are unwell, your body needs energy and protein to ensure a speedy recovery. Therefore, whilst you are in hospital, a strict, healthy diet may not be appropriate.

**Have regular Meals**
- Eat three meals a day - breakfast, lunch and evening meal.
- If you normally eat late in the evening, you may need to have a snack before bed, to make sure your blood sugars don’t go too low over night.

**Try Low sugar meals**
- Some of the desserts on the menu are low sugar such as custard, which is made with sweetener. Small portions of sponge pudding and pies are okay too.
- Ask friends and relatives to bring you fresh fruit, sugar free fizzy drinks or squashes, so that you can have these on your bedside cabinet.
- Choose low fat yoghurts, fruit or plain biscuits for snacks between meals.

**Choose high fibre starchy food**
Make sure that you have some starchy food with each meal:
- Breakfast - cereal, bread (toast)
- Lunchtime - jacket potato, sandwiches, salad with a bread roll
- Evening meal - potatoes, rice, pasta

**Eat fruit and vegetables**
- If you want to drink fruit juice – only one hospital portion per day is recommended, try to have this with breakfast.
- Aim for 5 portions a day – the hospital menu offers you a selection of salad side dishes at lunchtime, with fresh fruit or fruit pots as a dessert.
- Fruit contains fibre (which is good for you) and carbohydrates (which can affect your blood glucose). So, try to eat fruit throughout the day, rather than eating a big portion in one go. You can eat any fruit you like.

Items on the hospital menu have been coded to help you choose the appropriate diet for you; the menu is coded for **Better Choice**.
Try and choose items which promote a balanced diet.

**Better Choice options are lower in fat, salt and sugar and are suitable choices. These are the best options for patients with diabetes.**

**Menu swaps for healthier meals**

- If you want to have fizzy drinks try to have zero sugar options such as diet coke.
- A portion of fruit is roughly what will fit in the palm of your hand.

Aim to have some of each of these at each meal time to ensure a balanced plate.

- **Starchy carbohydrates**
- **Protein**
- **Vegetables**

Our custard is made with sweetener so you are able to have this as part of your meals along with other items on the menu marked with the **BC**.