



THE LOW CARB  
JUMPSTART

# GETTING STARTED

## on a Low Carbohydrate Lifestyle



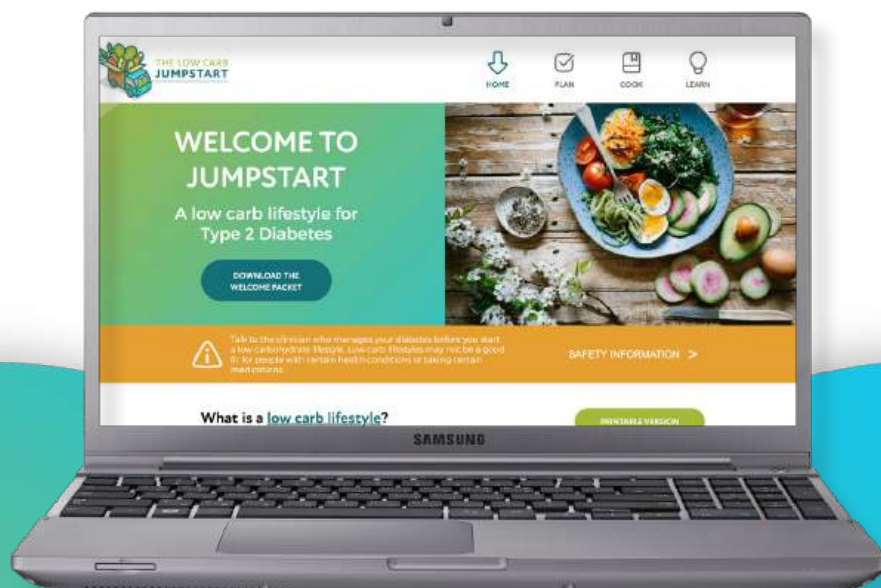
*The Low Carb JUMPSTART is created by The Michigan Collaborative for Type 2 Diabetes (MCT2D).  
Learn more at [MCT2D.org](http://MCT2D.org).*



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Prefer to access this information online? **Visit [jumpstart.mct2d.org](https://jumpstart.mct2d.org) to find this packet and more!**



## READ ME FIRST

*Talk to the healthcare provider who manages your diabetes before you start a low carbohydrate meal plan.*

### Managing your medications

***Certain medications should not be used in combination with a low carb meal plan.***

These include a class of medications called “SGLT2 Inhibitors” which include Jardiance (empagliflozin), Invokana (canagliflozin), Farxiga (dapagliflozin), and Steglatro (ertugliflozin). This also includes combination medications containing an SGLT2 Inhibitor such as SEGLUROMET, XIGDUO, Synjardy, Synjardy XR, Invokamet, Glyxambi, QTERN, and Trijardy XR.

***Certain medications often need to be adjusted before you start a low carb meal plan.*** These include Insulins (such as Humalog, Novolog, Lantus and Basaglar, etc.) and the class of medications called “Sulfonylureas” (such as Amaryl (glimepiride), Glucotrol (glipizide), Diabeta (glyburide), tolbutamide, Tolinase (tolazamide), Diabinese (chlorpropamide), etc).

If you take blood pressure medications, your healthcare team may need to adjust or stop your medication before you start a low carb eating plan.

We strongly recommend that you have a scheduled visit with your healthcare team to review your eating plan and your medications before you embark on your low carb journey.

### Keeping You Safe

Talk to your healthcare team about the symptoms of low blood sugar and low blood pressure and how to treat them as you change your eating plan.

## SIGNS OF LOW BLOOD SUGAR



SWEATING



PALLOR



IRRITABILITY



HUNGER



LACK OF COORDINATION



SLEEPINESS

# WELCOME:

## Introduction to a Low Carb Lifestyle





# LEARN THE LINGO

## Terms we will use throughout this packet

**Carbohydrates (carbs):** Carbohydrates or 'carbs' are one of three main nutrients that make up the food we eat, along with proteins and fats. Your body breaks down carbohydrates into sugar (glucose) and uses it for energy. Your body can use the sugar immediately or store it for later use in organs like the liver and tissues like muscle and fat.

*We will be using 'carbohydrates' and 'carbs' interchangeably throughout this packet.*

**Low Carbohydrate (Low Carb) Lifestyle or Meal Plan:** A low carbohydrate lifestyle or meal plan limits your intake of carbohydrates (carbs) from foods like grains, starchy vegetables, fruit, sugary snacks, and beverages, and emphasizes proteins, non-starchy vegetables, and healthy fats. This generally means eating less than 130g of carbohydrates per day.

*It is important to talk with your healthcare team before starting a low carbohydrate lifestyle to determine a suitable carb goal and adjust medications if necessary.*

**Blood sugar (blood glucose):** Blood sugar is the amount of sugar in your blood during any moment in time. Blood sugar levels can change throughout the day. For example, your blood sugar will rise as you digest the foods and drinks you consume and then come back down a few hours later.

**Insulin:** Insulin is a chemical released during digestion. It helps move sugar from the blood into your cells for energy. Everyone needs insulin to live.



Prefer to watch instead of read?

**Check out our “Intro to a Low Carb Lifestyle” video!**

This brief 10-minute video explaining the basics of low carb lifestyle for type 2 diabetes, by Rina Hisamatsu, MCT2D registered dietitian.

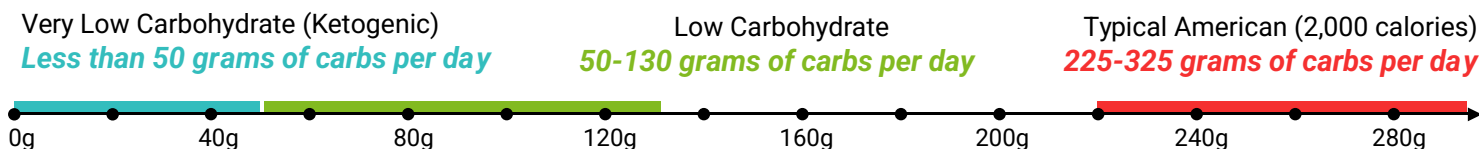


# LOW CARB LIFESTYLE

## For Type 2 Diabetes

### What is a low carb lifestyle?

A low **carb** lifestyle limits your intake of carbohydrates (carbs) from foods like bread, pasta, rice, potatoes and other starchy vegetables, sweets, baked goods, sugary beverages, and fruits and emphasizes proteins, non-starchy vegetables, and healthy fats.



**Meal with ~16g of carbs**

4-5 oz Grilled Fish or Chicken	0g carbs
3 cups Mixed Salad	5g carbs
1 oz Feta Cheese and Olives	1g carbs
2 tbsp Ranch Dressing	2g carbs
1/2 Avocado	8g carbs



**Meal with ~47g of carbs**

1/2 cup Brown Rice	22g carbs
1/2 cup Black Beans	15g carbs
4-5 oz Steak	0g carbs
1.5 cups Grilled Vegetables	10g carbs



**Meal with ~150g of carbs**

2 slices Pepperoni Pizza	70g carbs
4 pcs Mozzarella Sticks	30g carbs
1/2 cup Marinara Sauce	10g carbs
12 oz Regular Soda	40g carbs

### How does a low carb lifestyle help my diabetes?

Reducing your carb intake also reduces your body's **blood sugar** and **insulin** levels. When your insulin levels are low, your body stops storing extra sugar as fat, and starts using stored fat for energy. This can make it easier to lose weight and have more energy!

#### BENEFITS OF A LOW CARB LIFESTYLE



**WEIGHT LOSS**



**REDUCED BLOOD  
PRESSURE**



**REDUCED HUNGER  
& CRAVINGS**



**BLOOD SUGAR  
CONTROL**



**INCREASED  
ENERGY**

**What are carbs?** Carbs (i.e., carbohydrates) are a nutrient that is broken down by the body into sugar (glucose). There are 3 types of nutrients: carbs, fat, and protein.

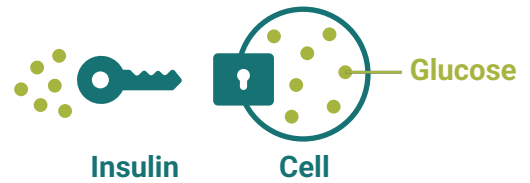
**What is blood sugar (or blood glucose)?** Blood sugar is the level of sugar in your blood after your body breaks down nutrients into glucose for energy.

**What is insulin?** Insulin is a chemical released when you eat carbs. Everyone needs insulin to live.

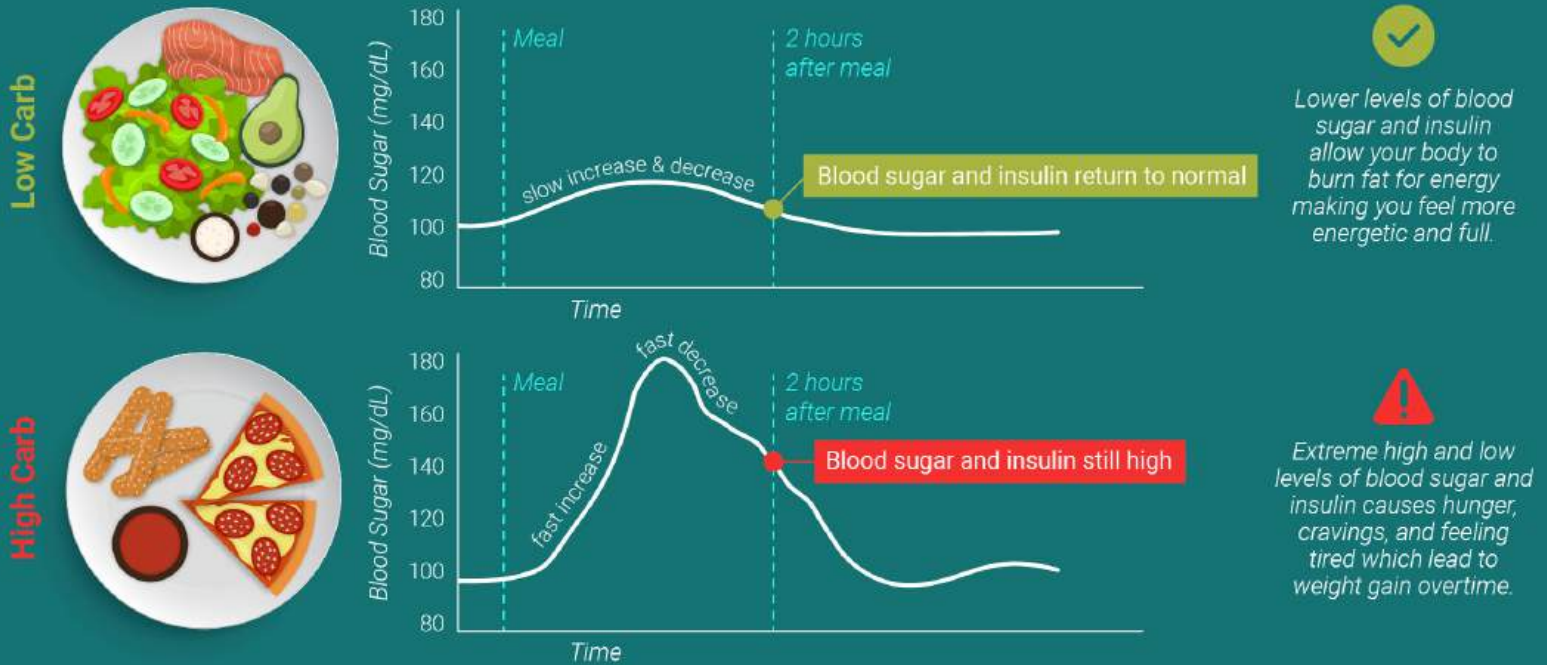


## What does insulin do?

Insulin helps move glucose (sugar) from the blood into the cells for energy. You can think of insulin as a key that unlocks your cell so that glucose can enter. High levels of insulin tell your body to store extra sugar as fat. Low levels of insulin tell your body to burn fat for energy.



## What happens when you eat a low vs. high carb meal?



## Getting Started

**Start by changing one meal per day (e.g., breakfast).** It can be easier to transition gradually to a low carb meal plan. Start with making changes to one meal and do this for a few days to a week. Once you've got the hang of it, try modifying an additional meal. Focus on:

- Adding protein, non-starchy vegetables, & healthy fats
- Swapping out your starch (bread, rice, potato, pasta etc.) for non-starchy vegetables (broccoli, leafy greens, cauliflower, green beans etc.)

**Listen to your hunger cues.** One benefit of following a low carb lifestyle is you don't have to count calories. You are encouraged to eat when you are hungry and stop when you are full.

**Replace sugary drinks such as pop and fruit juice with water and unsweetened beverages.** Enjoy black coffee and unsweetened teas. If using flavored creamers, replace it with a splash of heavy cream or sugar-free versions.

**Find good snack options.** Replace high carb, sugary snacks like chips and baked goods with low sugar fruits like berries. For savory snacks, try veggies and dip, deviled eggs, tuna salad, or nuts and cheese combos.

Choose this	Instead of
Eggs or omelette	Cereal or bagel
Water with lemon	Juice
80%+ dark chocolate, sugar-free Jell-o	Pastries
Greek yogurt w/ berries	Ice cream
Lettuce wrap, low carb bread	Bread
Riced cauliflower	Rice
Mixed nuts, string cheese, jerky	Crackers
Grilled chicken, steak, pork, tofu	Fried foods
Sliced veggies, pickles, olives	Packaged snacks
Sparkling water, fruit-infused water	Soda
Seltzer, gin or vodka tonic	Beer
Berries, melon, kiwi, apple	Sugary snacks
Mashed cauliflower, rutabaga, kohlrabi	Potatoes
Keto "cloud" dough, nut flour crust	Pizza dough
Mustard, oil and vinegar, herbs, spices	Ketchup
Almond or coconut flour	White flour
Heavy cream, sugar-free creamer	Flavored creamer
Stevia, monkfruit, erythritol, sucralose	Sugar
Zucchini noodles, hearts of palm pasta, shirataki noodles, spaghetti squash	Pasta

## 0g CARB FOODS

(Per serving)



**Meats**  
Beef, Lamb,  
Pork, Veal (3 oz)



**Poultry**  
Chicken, Turkey,  
Duck (3 oz)



**Fish / Shellfish**  
Salmon, Tuna, Sardines,  
Shrimp, Lobster, Crab (3 oz)



**Eggs**  
whole or  
egg white (1 egg)



**Lemon, Lime,  
Vinegar, Herbs,  
Spices** (1 tsp)



**Fats: Oils**  
Avocado, Olive,  
Sesame, Peanut,  
Canola (1 tsp)



**Fats: Other**  
Butter (1 tsp),  
Mayo (1 tbsp),  
Heavy cream (1 tbsp)



**Beverages**  
Water, Black coffee,  
Unsweetened tea,  
sparkling water (8 oz)

## 1-5g CARB FOODS

(Per serving)



**Leafy Greens**  
Lettuce, Spinach, Arugula,  
Kale, Collards, Turnip, Romaine  
(1 cup raw or ½ cup cooked)



**Non-starchy Vegetables**  
Asparagus, Bell peppers, Bok Choy,  
Brussel Sprouts, Cucumbers, Cabbage,  
Cauliflower, Eggplant, onions  
(1 cup raw or ½ cup cooked)



**Avocado**  
(1 oz or 2 tbsp)



**Deli Meat & Bacon**  
(1 oz or 2 slices)



**Dairy**  
Cheese (1 oz or ¼ cup shredded),  
Cream cheese (1 tbsp)



**Tofu**  
(3 oz)



**Hummus**  
(1 tbsp)

## 5-10g CARB FOODS

(Per serving)



**Edamame**  
(1/2 cup peeled)



**Beets**  
(1/2 cup)



**Raspberries**  
(1/2 cup or 2 oz)



**Strawberries**  
(6 medium or 2 oz)



**Carrots**  
(10 baby carrots  
or ¾ cup)



**Squash**  
butternut, Spaghetti,  
acorn, pumpkin  
(1 cup)



**Nuts**  
Walnuts, almonds,  
Brazil Nuts, Cashews,  
Pistachios, Peanuts (1 oz)



**Seeds**  
Flaxseed (3 tbsp),  
Sunflower (1 tbsp)  
Chia Seeds (2 tbsp)



**Full-fat plain  
Greek yogurt**  
(1 cup)

## 10-20g CARB FOODS

(Per serving)



**Cow's milk**  
(1 cup)



**Blueberries,  
Blackberries**  
(1/2 cup or 2.5 oz)



**Beans, Lentils,  
Quinoa**  
(1/2 cup cooked)



**Sweet Potato**  
(1/2 cup mashed)



**Kiwi, Peach**  
(1 whole)



**Rollled Oats**  
(1/3 cup)



**Melon / Watermelon**  
(1 cup diced)



**Green Peas, Corn**  
(1/2 cup)

## HIGH CARB FOODS



**Rice**  
(45g per 1 cup  
cooked)



**Pasta**  
(45g per 1 cup  
cooked)



**Bagel**  
(60g each)



**French Fries**  
(45g per  
medium size)



**Sugary Cereal**  
(30g per 1 cup)



**Fruit Jam  
or Jelly**  
(30g per 2 tbsp)



**Chocolate Bar**  
(26g per bar)



# UNDERSTANDING NUTRITION LABELS

Helping you find foods that fit into a low carb lifestyle

**Serving Size:** Always check the serving size to see the portion it reflects. The nutrient amounts shown on the label all refer to the size of one serving.

*In this example, one serving is 1 cup (55g).*

**Total Carbohydrate:** The sum of all carbohydrates in one serving of a product including starch, sugars, and dietary fiber. All, except dietary fiber, will play a role in raising blood sugar and insulin levels.

*This example has 21g of total carbohydrates in one serving.*

**Dietary fiber:** Fiber is an important part of a low carbohydrate lifestyle because it helps you feel full, keeps blood sugar levels steady, and your gut healthy. A well-balanced low carbohydrate lifestyle will include foods high in dietary fiber such as leafy greens, broccoli, cauliflower, peppers, nuts, and seeds.

*This example has 2g of dietary fiber in one serving.*

**Total sugars:** Sugars are part of total carbohydrate and include sugars naturally present in food, like fruit or milk, as well as sugars that have been added to a food, like sweetened beverages and desserts. Regardless of the source, all sugars are absorbed into the bloodstream and raise insulin levels. These should be limited in a low carbohydrate lifestyle.

*This example has 8g of total sugars in one serving.*

**Protein:** Protein helps you feel full and satisfied. Check the label to see how many grams of protein is in a serving of a product. A good source of protein will have at least 7-8g per serving.

*This example has 10g of protein in one serving.*

## Nutrition Facts

10 servings per container

**Serving size** **1 cup (55g)**

**Amount per serving**

**Calories** **165**

**% Daily Value\***

**Total Fat** 1.5g **2%**

Saturated Fat 0.5g **3%**

Trans Fat 0g

Polyunsaturated Fat 0.5g

Monounsaturated Fat 0.5g

**Cholesterol** 0mg **0%**

**Sodium** 180mg **8%**

**Fluoride** 0g

**Total Carbohydrate** 21g **8%**

Dietary Fiber 2g **7%**

Soluble Fiber <1g

Insoluble Fiber 1g

**Total Sugars** 8g

Includes 6g Added Sugars **12%**

**Protein** 10g

Vitamin D 3mcg (80IU) **15%**

Calcium 170mg **13%**

Iron 3mg **15%**

Potassium 140mg **3%**

Vitamin C 10mg **11%**

Thiamin 0.3mg **25%**

Niacin 3mcg **19%**

Vitamin B<sub>6</sub> 0.4mg **25%**

Biotin 6mcg **20%**

Vitamin E 6mg **40%**

Phosphorus 112mg **9%**

Iodine 15mcg **10%**

Zinc 7mg **17%**

Manganese 0.3mg **13%**

\* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Calories per gram:

Fat 10 · Carbohydrate 4 · Protein 3

**PLAN:**

**Set Your Goals and  
Track Your Progress**



# SET YOUR LOW CARB GOALS

Choose realistic goals that will keep you focused and motivated

## Talk to your healthcare team

*Before setting a daily carbohydrate goal, discuss a low carbohydrate lifestyle with your diabetes care team. Your care team can help you determine what is an appropriate goal based on your overall health, medications, and interest level.*

Remember that reducing the amount of carbohydrates in your diet will reduce your blood sugar. Patients taking insulin or some oral medications like Sulfonylureas (See **Read Me First** on pg.3) are especially at risk of having low blood sugar levels when they eat less carbohydrates. If you are on one of these medications, you may need to reduce your dose before starting a low carb lifestyle in order to prevent you from having low blood sugar. This doesn't mean you shouldn't lower your carb intake, it just means you should discuss it with your clinician.

## Set your carbohydrate goal

*We recommend eating between 50-130g of carbohydrates per day.* You can always decide to increase or decrease your carbohydrate goal.

*My goal is to have a daily carbohydrate intake of:*

## Consider adding additional goals

Consider setting some additional goals to follow. These goals, combined with a reduced carb intake, will help you manage your type 2 diabetes.

*My biggest motivation for wanting to improve my health is:*

*My goal is to have a blood sugar range of:*

*My goal is to check my blood sugar this many times per day:*

*My goal is to incorporate some movement I enjoy into the week such as:*



# TRACKING YOUR PROGRESS

Track your blood sugar, carb intake, and milestones

## Weekly carb and blood sugar tracker

*This tracker will help you record important information about your daily food intake and blood sugar levels.* Follow these instructions to begin using the tracker on a daily basis.

At the beginning of each week, complete the goals section and write the date next to the days of the week. Then throughout the week, record the time you eat each meal, your blood sugar as often as you choose, the food and drink you consume, and the carb content of each food item.

At the end of each day, write the total number of carbs you consumed during the day, record any physical activity you completed, and circle how you felt about your meals. Complete the reflection section at the end of the week. You can share your tracker with your clinician or keep it for your own records!

WEEKLY CARB & BLOOD SUGAR TRACKER		MONDAY	DATE:	TUESDAY	DATE:	WEDNESDAY	DATE:
<b>BREAKFAST</b>		<b>BREAKFAST</b>		<b>BREAKFAST</b>		<b>BREAKFAST</b>	
Blood sugar before meal:		Blood sugar before meal:		Blood sugar before meal:		Blood sugar before meal:	
FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS		FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS	
Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:		Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:		Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:		Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:	
<b>LUNCH</b>		<b>LUNCH</b>		<b>LUNCH</b>		<b>LUNCH</b>	
Blood sugar before meal:		Blood sugar before meal:		Blood sugar before meal:		Blood sugar before meal:	
FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS		FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS	
Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:		Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:		Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:		Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:	
<b>DINNER</b>		<b>DINNER</b>		<b>DINNER</b>		<b>DINNER</b>	
Blood sugar before meal:		Blood sugar before meal:		Blood sugar before meal:		Blood sugar before meal:	
FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS		FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS	
Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:		Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:		Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:		Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:	
<b>SNACK</b>		<b>SNACK</b>		<b>SNACK</b>		<b>SNACK</b>	
FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS		FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS	
Blood sugar before bed:		Blood sugar before bed:		Blood sugar before bed:		Blood sugar before bed:	
Total carbs for the day:		Total carbs for the day:		Total carbs for the day:		Total carbs for the day:	
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY		DURATION		PHYSICAL ACTIVITY		DURATION	
How do you feel about the meals you ate today?		Good Neutral Needs work		How do you feel about the meals you ate today?		Good Neutral Needs work	

**REFLECTIONS**  
(Complete at end of week)

This week my energy level was (circle)

1 2 3 4 5

Low I felt very tired High I had lots of energy

This week my food cravings were (circle)

1 2 3 4 5

Low I had no cravings High I had lots of cravings

NOTES:

Always follow your healthcare provider's instructions on when and how often to check your blood sugar.  
MCT2.org



Scan the QR code to download this tracker or explore other options!



WEEKLY CARB & BLOOD SUGAR TRACKER

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

TARGET RANGES	
PRE-MEAL	POST-MEAL

**OPTIONAL GOALS**  
(Complete at beginning of week)

Daily carb intake: \_\_\_\_\_

Minutes of physical activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Daily blood sugar checks: \_\_\_\_\_

**REFLECTIONS**  
(Complete at end of week)

This week my energy level was:  
(circle)

1

2

3

4

5

**Low**  
I felt very tired

**High**  
I had lots of energy

This week my food cravings were:  
(circle)

1

2

3

4

5

**Low**  
I had no cravings

**High**  
I had lots of cravings

NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_

MONDAY	DATE:	TUESDAY	DATE:	WEDNESDAY	DATE:
BREAKFAST	:	BREAKFAST	:	BREAKFAST	:
Blood sugar before meal:		Blood sugar before meal:		Blood sugar before meal:	
FOOD / DRINK ITEM	CARBS	FOOD / DRINK ITEM	CARBS	FOOD / DRINK ITEM	CARBS
Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:		Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:		Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:	
LUNCH	:	LUNCH	:	LUNCH	:
Blood sugar before meal:		Blood sugar before meal:		Blood sugar before meal:	
FOOD / DRINK ITEM	CARBS	FOOD / DRINK ITEM	CARBS	FOOD / DRINK ITEM	CARBS
Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:		Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:		Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:	
DINNER	:	DINNER	:	DINNER	:
Blood sugar before meal:		Blood sugar before meal:		Blood sugar before meal:	
FOOD / DRINK ITEM	CARBS	FOOD / DRINK ITEM	CARBS	FOOD / DRINK ITEM	CARBS
Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:		Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:		Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:	
SNACK	:	SNACK	:	SNACK	:
FOOD / DRINK ITEM	CARBS	FOOD / DRINK ITEM	CARBS	FOOD / DRINK ITEM	CARBS
Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:		Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:		Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:	
Blood sugar before bed:		Blood sugar before bed:		Blood sugar before bed:	
Total carbs for the day:		Total carbs for the day:		Total carbs for the day:	
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY	DURATION	PHYSICAL ACTIVITY	DURATION	PHYSICAL ACTIVITY	DURATION
How do you feel about the meals you ate today?	Good Neutral Needs work	How do you feel about the meals you ate today?	Good Neutral Needs work	How do you feel about the meals you ate today?	Good Neutral Needs work



THURSDAY		DATE:		FRIDAY		DATE:		SATURDAY		DATE:		SUNDAY		DATE:	
BREAKFAST		:		BREAKFAST		:		BREAKFAST		:		BREAKFAST		:	
Blood sugar before meal:				Blood sugar before meal:				Blood sugar before meal:				Blood sugar before meal:			
FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS		FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS		FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS		FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS	
Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:				Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:				Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:				Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:			
LUNCH		:		LUNCH		:		LUNCH		:		LUNCH		:	
Blood sugar before meal:				Blood sugar before meal:				Blood sugar before meal:				Blood sugar before meal:			
FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS		FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS		FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS		FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS	
Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:				Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:				Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:				Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:			
DINNER		:		DINNER		:		DINNER		:		DINNER		:	
Blood sugar before meal:				Blood sugar before meal:				Blood sugar before meal:				Blood sugar before meal:			
FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS		FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS		FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS		FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS	
Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:				Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:				Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:				Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:			
SNACK		:		SNACK		:		SNACK		:		SNACK		:	
FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS		FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS		FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS		FOOD / DRINK ITEM		CARBS	
Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:				Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:				Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:				Blood sugar 2 hours after meal:			
Blood sugar before bed:				Blood sugar before bed:				Blood sugar before bed:				Blood sugar before bed:			
Total carbs for the day:				Total carbs for the day:				Total carbs for the day:				Total carbs for the day:			
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY		DURATION		PHYSICAL ACTIVITY		DURATION		PHYSICAL ACTIVITY		DURATION		PHYSICAL ACTIVITY		DURATION	
How do you feel about the meals you ate today?		Good		How do you feel about the meals you ate today?		Good		How do you feel about the meals you ate today?		Good		How do you feel about the meals you ate today?		Good	
		Neutral				Neutral				Neutral				Neutral	
		Needs work				Needs work				Needs work				Needs work	



# COOK:

## Build a Low Carb Meal Plan



# BUILDING YOUR PLATE

Follow the 4-step process to create delicious low carb meals

**Focus on these 4 steps to create a balanced low carb meal.** Remember, not every meal needs to include ALL of the steps to be filling and nutritious. For example, a simple tofu and broccoli stir fry dish may only include steps 1-3 but still makes a great low carb dinner option.

## STEP 1:

Pick a Protein  
(3-5oz)

Choose good quality protein sources like poultry, fish and seafood, meat, eggs, or plant-based options like tofu, tempeh, and beans.

## STEP 2:

Add Non-Starchy Vegetables  
(Half your plate)

Enjoy them raw or cooked any way you like including colorful salads and grilled summer vegetables!

## STEP 3:

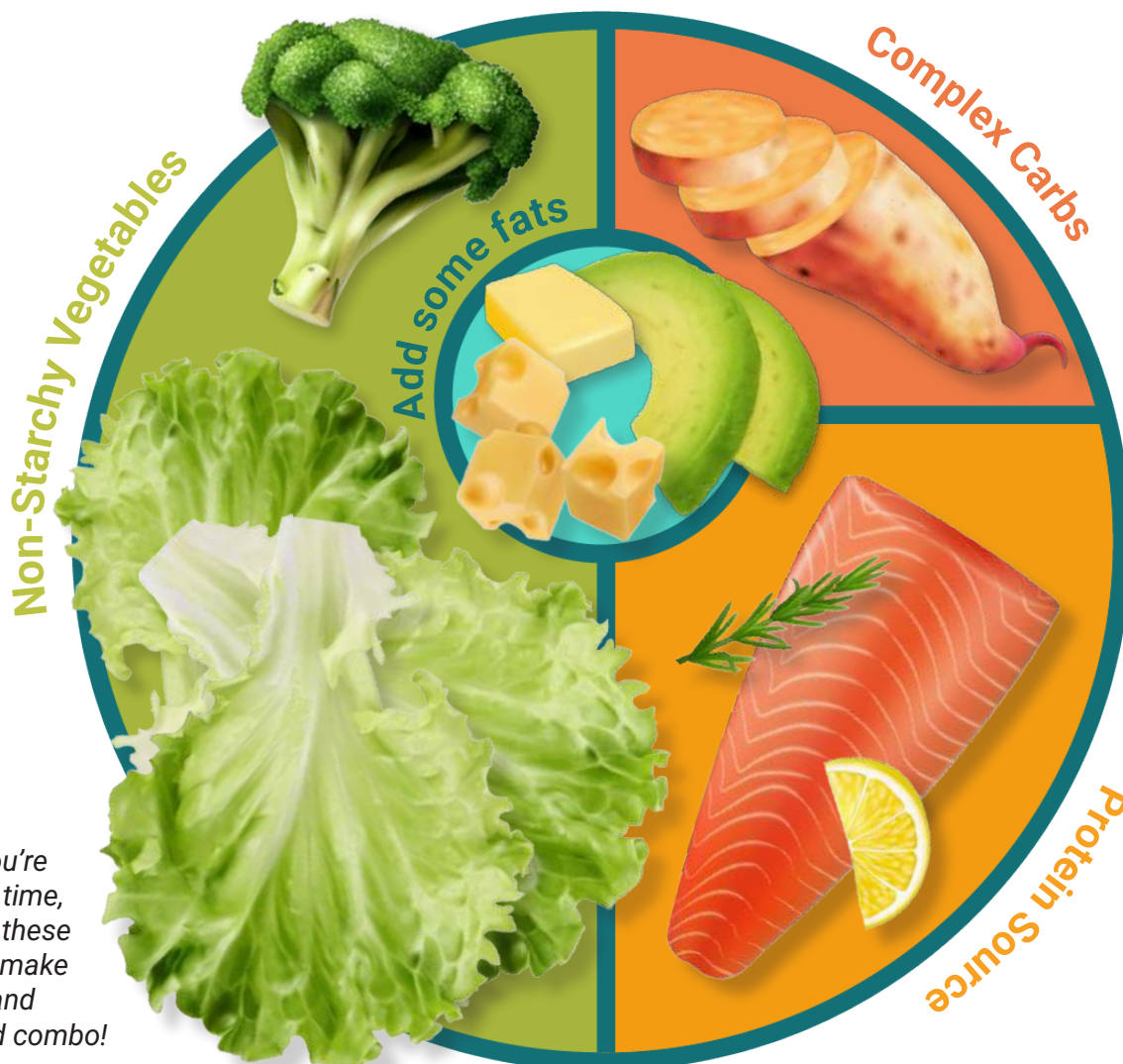
Jazz it up with fats  
(Optional)

Add some nuts and seeds, olives, avocado, or a sprinkling of your favorite cheese for flavor and texture.

## STEP 4:

Add some complex carbs  
(Optional)

Add a side of complex carbs like fruits, whole grains, beans, lentils, or starchy vegetables like sweet potato, squash, corn, or peas.



**Tip:** If you're short on time, pair 2 of these steps to make a quick and balanced combo!



## STEP 1: Pick a Protein (3-5oz)



**Poultry**  
(chicken, turkey)



**Eggs**



**Canned protein**  
(salmon, tuna, chicken, crab,  
etc.)



**Red meat**  
(beef, pork, lamb, duck,  
venison, bison, etc.)



**Soy**  
(tofu, tempeh, edamame,  
soybeans)



**Plain Greek yogurt**



**Fish**  
(salmon, trout, tuna,  
mackerel, cod, tilapia,  
etc.)



**Seafood**  
(shrimp, crab, mussels,  
squid, scallops, oysters,  
lobster, etc.)



**Beans or lentils**



**Want to learn more about protein and diabetes? Read this article by the DiaTribe!**

[diatribe.org/protein-and-diabetes-what-you-need-know](https://diatribe.org/protein-and-diabetes-what-you-need-know)





## STEP 1: Pick a Protein (Continued)

### How much protein should I have?

**Protein plays an essential role in maintaining the proper functioning of your body. It is a major component of every cell in the body.** Protein is necessary for muscle growth and repair, and the maintenance of healthy skin, hair, nails, and other organs.

We recommend starting out with 3-5oz of protein (like chicken, fish, meat, or tofu) for your meals. As a rule of thumb, 4oz is slightly bigger than the size of your palm and the thickness of a deck of cards. You can also use your dinner plate (10in) as a guide in which case your protein source would take up a little over 1/4 of the plate.

### Using your hand as a portion guide



1 portion of protein  
= **your palm**



1 portion of vegetables =  
**your fist**



1 portion of carbs =  
**your cupped hand**



1 portion of fats =  
**your thumb**

The amount of protein that is right for you may vary and you may notice you need more or less depending on the day and activity level.

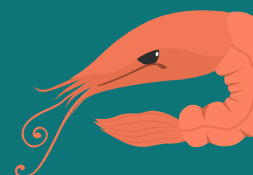
*Feeling hungry? Try this!*

**Increase the amount of protein, non-starchy vegetables, OR fats in your meal.**

**Protein:** add an ounce of a high-quality protein like chicken, tofu, fish, or beef

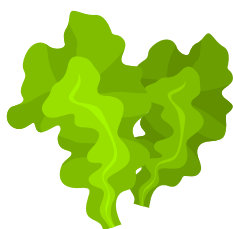
**Non-starchy vegetables:** add an extra helping of your favorite non-starchy vegetables

**Fats:** add some nuts/seeds, a few slices of avocado, or some dairy like cheese, sour cream, or Greek yogurt





## STEP 2: Add Non-Starchy Vegetables *(Half your plate)*

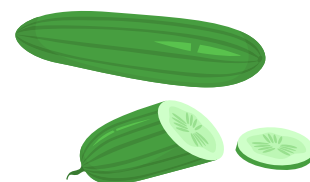


### **Greens**

*(lettuce, spinach, arugula, kale, romaine, endive, microgreens, collards, chard, swiss chard, bok choy, sprouts, etc.)*



### **Green beans**



### **Zucchini**



### **Cauliflower**



### **Broccoli/ Broccolini**



### **Tomato**



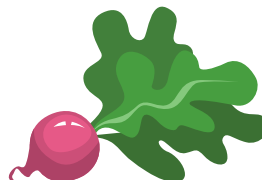
### **Brussels sprouts**



### **Cabbage (red/green)**



### **Peppers**



### **Radishes**

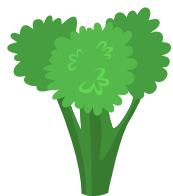
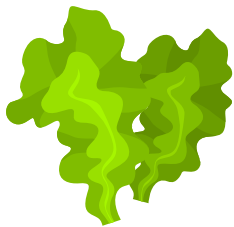


### **Mushrooms**

**Kohlrabi | Leeks | Okra | Celery | Cucumber | Eggplant |  
Onion | Shallots | Sugar snap peas | Turnips**



## STEP 2: Add Non-Starchy Vegetables (Continued)



### Non-starchy Vegetables: Leafy Greens

**1 Serving =**  
1 cup raw or ½ cup cooked

**<5g Carb**

Arugula  
Chicory  
Kale  
Endive  
Lettuce  
Spinach  
Romaine  
Watercress  
Radicchio

### Non-starchy Vegetables: Other

**1 Serving =**  
1 cup raw or ½ cup cooked

**5g Carb**

Artichoke  
Asparagus  
Baby corn  
Bamboo shoot  
Bean sprouts  
Bok choy  
Broccoli and Chinese broccoli,  
broccolini  
Brussel sprouts  
Cabbage/purple cabbage/napa  
cabbage  
Cauliflower  
Celery  
Chayote

### Non-starchy Vegetables: Other (Continued)

**1 Serving =**  
1 cup raw or ½ cup cooked

**5g Carb**

Cucumber  
Daikon  
Eggplant  
Fennel  
Gourd  
Green beans and wax beans  
Green onions/scallion/chives  
Greens (mustard/collard/turnip)  
Hearts of palm  
Jicama  
Kohlrabi  
Leeks  
Mushrooms  
Okra  
Nopales  
Onions/shallots  
Pea pods/pea shoots  
Peppers (all varieties)  
Radishes  
Rutabaga  
Seaweed  
Snap peas/snow peas  
Swiss chard  
Tomatoes  
Turnips  
Water chestnuts  
Zucchini





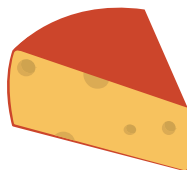
### STEP 3: Jazz it up with fats *(Optional)*

Fats are naturally found in foods like fatty fish (salmon, trout, mackerel, tuna, cod), red meat (beef, pork, lamb), poultry (chicken, turkey), dairy products, nuts and seeds, olives, avocados, and butter/oils. If these fats are included in your meal or you are using butter or oil for cooking, you likely won't need to add any extra. If you want to add some extra flavor or texture, consider adding small amounts of things like walnuts, almonds, olives, diced avocado, or a sprinkling of cheese.



#### **Sauces**

*(Hollandaise, Bearnaise, pesto, mayonnaise, aioli, etc.)*



#### **Full-fat cheese**

*(1 serving = 1 oz or ¼ cup shredded)*



#### **Dairy**

*(butter, sour cream, heavy cream, cream cheese, plain Greek yogurt, mascarpone, ricotta, cottage cheese)*



#### **Nuts / Nut butter**

*(walnuts, almonds, pecans, macadamia, Brazil nuts, hazelnuts, pine nuts, peanuts)*



#### **Full-fat dressings**

*(ranch, blue cheese, Italian)*



#### **Avocado / Avocado oil**



#### **Nut oils**

*(sesame, macadamia nut, walnut, almond, coconut)*



#### **Non-dairy fats**

*(lard, ghee, tallow, duck fat, schmaltz, coconut cream, coconut milk)*



#### **Seeds**

*(chia seeds, flax seeds, hemp seeds, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, sesame seed/tahini)*

#### **Olives / Olive oil**



#### STEP 4: Add some complex carbs *(Optional)*

*On a low carb lifestyle, the focus is on reducing the total number of carbs you eat, but there is often wiggle room to include some carbs based on your individual carb goal.* Add about 1 serving of your carb choice per meal from examples like fruits, beans and lentils, starchy vegetables, and whole grains. See the list on the next page for more ideas and serving sizes



**Beans / Lentils**



**Squash**  
*(pumpkin, winter, acorn, butternut, etc.)*



**Berries**  
*(raspberries, blackberries, strawberries, blueberries)*



**Beets**



**Carrots**



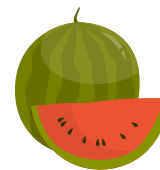
**Yams / Sweet potato**



**Kiwi / Plum**



**Corn**



**Melon / Watermelon**



**Whole grains**  
*(quinoa, farro, barley, brown rice, whole wheat pasta, whole wheat bread, oats)*



## STEP 4: Add some complex carbs (Optional)

### Starchy Vegetables

1 Serving	80 Calories	15g Carb
	0-3g Protein	0-1g Fat
¾ cup winter squash		
¾ cup butternut squash		
½ cup acorn squash		
½ cup potato (sweet or mashed) or 1 small potato (3oz)		
1 cup beets		
1 cup carrots		
½ cup corn		
½ cup green peas		
1 cup pumpkin		
½ cup taro		
½ cup yams		
½ cup lentils		
½ cup beans/legumes		

### Milk

1 Serving	80-120 Cal	12g Carb
	8g Protein	0-5g Fat
1 cup milk (2%)		
1 ½ cups plain soy milk		

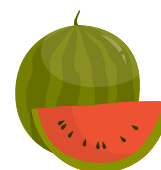
### Fruits

1 Serving	60 Calories	15g Carb
	0g Protein	0g Fat
1 cup berries		
1 small fresh fruit (kiwi/plum)		
1 cup melon/watermelon		
1 (6 ½ oz) orange		
1 small or ½ large banana		
17 (3oz) small grapes		
12 (3.4oz) cherries		
½ cup canned fruit (in water)		

### Whole Grains

1 Serving	80 Calories	15g Carb
	0-3g Protein	0-3g Fat
⅓ cup quinoa or farro, cooked		
⅓ cup barley, cooked		
½ cup oats, cooked		
⅓ cup brown rice, cooked		
⅓ cup whole wheat pasta, cooked		
1 slice whole wheat/whole grain bread		
2-5 whole wheat crackers		

**Note:** For any packaged foods, remember to check the nutrition label to get accurate information on carb content.





# 7-DAY SAMPLE MEAL PLAN

## Very Low Carb Meal Plan (<50g per day)

<50g  
per day

Are you wondering what to eat on a very low carbohydrate lifestyle? Look no further! Here is a sample 7-day meal plan to get you started. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals are listed below with total carbohydrate estimates.

SUNDAY		
Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
<p><b>3 egg omelet</b> with ½ cup diced vegetables (peppers, onion, mushroom, tomatoes), and 1oz shredded cheese</p> <p>½ cup sliced strawberries</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 10g</b></p>	<p><b>Wrap sandwich</b> (8 inch low carb wrap, 4-5oz turkey, cheese, spinach, tomato, and onion). Add mustard, pickles, mayo, and seasoning as desired</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 25g</b></p>	<p><b>2 cups zucchini noodles</b> topped with ½ cup low carbohydrate tomato sauce, 4-5oz ground beef, and 1 cup sauteed non-starchy vegetables</p> <p><i>Optional: add grated Parmesan</i></p> <p><b>Total carbs: 15g</b></p>
MONDAY		
Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
<p><b>Baked avocado cups</b> (cut avocado in half, add 1 egg to center of each half – bake at 425 degrees for 15-20 min)</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 18g</b></p>	<p><b>2-3 cups mixed greens</b> topped with 4-5oz tuna or chicken, diced cucumber, tomato, onion, pickles, olives, avocado, feta or shredded cheese</p> <p>Serve with 2 tbsp ranch dressing or lemon and olive oil vinaigrette</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 15g</b></p>	<p><b>Chicken Alfredo</b> with 4-5oz chicken, Alfredo sauce, and 2 cups zucchini noodles</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 12g</b></p>
TUESDAY		
Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
<p><b>¾ cup plain Greek yogurt</b> topped with 1oz chopped almonds, ½ cup mixed berries</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 18g</b></p>	<p><b>Lettuce wraps</b> (2-3 large lettuce leaves topped with 4-5oz ground turkey or chicken, diced tomato, and ½ diced avocado, ¼ cup shredded cheese, 2 tbsp ranch dressing)</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 10g</b></p>	<p><b>Meatloaf</b> made with sugar-free BBQ glaze, 1 cup sauteed green beans, 1 cup cauliflower mash</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 18g</b></p>

## WEDNESDAY

### Breakfast

**Farmer's breakfast** made with 2 slices bacon or other breakfast meats

2 eggs, cooked in any style

½-1 cup spinach or other greens sauteed with garlic

½ cup berries

**Total carbs: 12g**

### Lunch

**Burrito bowl** made with 1.5 cups cauliflower rice, 4-5oz taco meat, 1 cup sauteed vegetables, 2 tbsp salsa, 1 tbsp sour cream, 1 tbsp guacamole

**Total carbs: 17g**

### Dinner

#### 4-5oz grilled fish

2 cups sauteed non-starchy vegetables sprinkled with 1oz walnuts

**Total carbs: 10g**

## THURSDAY

### Breakfast

**Quick "breakfast board"** (2 boiled eggs, ½ cup berries with ¾ cup Greek yogurt, and 1.5oz mixed nuts or cheese)

**Total carbs: 14-18g**

### Lunch

**Cobb salad** (2-3 cups lettuce or salad mix, 4-5oz diced chicken or tuna, ½ diced avocado, tomatoes, cucumber, and 2 tbsp blue cheese dressing)

**Total carbs: 15g**

### Dinner

**Chicken fajitas** with 4-5oz chicken, 1 cup sauteed non starchy vegetables, 2 tbsp sour cream, ½ avocado

Serve with 2 cups of riced cauliflower

**Total carbs: 27g**

## FRIDAY

### Breakfast

**Smoothie** (Blend 1 cup unsweetened coconut milk, ½ cup raspberries, 1-2 scoops protein powder or 6oz silken tofu, 1 handful ice, stevia)

OR ready-made protein shake (check nutrition label for carbohydrate content)

**Total carbs: 7g**

### Lunch

#### 4-5oz grilled chicken, beef, pork, fish

2 cups grilled/sauteed non-starchy vegetables (use frozen or fresh)

**Total carbs: 5-7g**

### Dinner

**Zucchini boats** (Slice zucchini in half, scoop out seeds. Fill with ground turkey/chicken, ¼ cup sauce, ½ cup shredded cheese, and diced onion, bell peppers, and mushrooms. Bake at 400 degrees for 15-25 min or until soft)

**Total carbs: 10g**

## SATURDAY

### Breakfast

**Egg bites** (whisk together 2-3 eggs, with chopped onion, peppers, tomato, spinach, mushrooms, herbs and spices, 1-2oz cheese of choice. Pour mixture into muffin tin and bake at 350 degrees for 15-20 min or until set)

**Total carbs: 5g**

### Lunch

#### 1 cup tuna salad/chicken salad/egg salad

Serve over 2 cups of mixed leafy greens or make into a wrap or sandwich using low carbohydrate bread.

*Optional: 1oz cheese or nuts*

**Total carbs: 10g (26g with wrap)**

### Dinner

#### 4-5oz steak

Roasted brussel sprouts with crushed bacon

1 cup mashed cauliflower with garlic and parsley


**Total carbs: 15g**

# 7-DAY SAMPLE MEAL PLAN

An example low carb meal plan (50-130g carbohydrates/day)

50-130g  
per day

Are you wondering what to eat on a low carbohydrate lifestyle? Look no further! Here is a sample 7-day meal plan to get you started. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals are listed below with total carbohydrate estimates. Add a low-carbohydrate snack, as needed, using the recommended snack list.

SUNDAY			
Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	
<p><b>3 egg omelet</b> with ½ cup diced vegetables (peppers, onion, mushroom, tomatoes), and 1oz shredded cheese</p> <p>1 slice whole wheat bread or 1 cup mixed berries</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 20-25g</b></p>	<p><b>Wrap sandwich</b> (8 inch low carb wrap, 4-5oz turkey, cheese, spinach, tomato, and onion). Add mustard, pickles, mayo, and seasoning as desired</p> <p><i>Optional: add 1oz nuts for crunch or avocado</i></p> <p><b>Total carbs: 25-30g</b></p>	<p><b>2 cups spaghetti squash*</b> topped with ½ cup low carb tomato sauce, 4-5oz ground beef, and 1 cup sautéed non-starchy vegetables</p> <p><i>Optional: add grated Parmesan</i></p> <p><i>*Note: Can also use high-protein, low carbohydrate pasta</i></p> <p><b>Total carbs: 40g</b></p>	
MONDAY			
Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	
<p><b>¾ cup plain Greek yogurt</b> topped with 1oz mixed nuts, 1 cup berries or 1 piece fruit (1 small apple, plum, kiwi, 1 cup cantaloupe)</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 25g</b></p>	<p><b>2-3 cups mixed greens</b> topped with 4-5oz tuna or other canned fish, ½ cup chickpeas, diced cucumber, tomato, onion, pickles, olives, avocado, and feta or shredded cheese</p> <p>Serve with 2 tbsp ranch dressing or lemon and olive oil vinaigrette</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 25g</b></p>	<p><b>Chicken Alfredo</b> (whole grain fettuccine with 4-5oz chicken grilled, ½ cup Alfredo sauce, and 2oz (dried) whole grain fettuccine)</p> <p>Serve with side salad (dressing full-fat or olive oil and vinegar)</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 50g</b></p>	
TUESDAY			
Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	
<p><b>Baked avocado cups</b> (cut avocado in half, add 1 egg to center of each half, then bake at 425 degrees for 15-20 min)</p> <p>1 piece of fruit (1 small apple, plum, kiwi, 1 cup cantaloupe, 1 cup berries)</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 30g</b></p>	<p><b>Lettuce wraps</b> (2-3 large lettuce leaves topped with 4-5oz turkey or chicken, 2 tbsp hummus, diced tomato, onion, and 1oz pumpkin seeds)</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 20g</b></p>	<p><b>2 cups lentil soup</b> (brown lentils, onions, garlic, diced carrots, zucchini, celery, mushrooms)</p> <p>Chia pudding (mix 1 tbsp chia seeds, ½ cup coconut cream, and a dash of stevia. Let sit overnight)</p> <p><i>You can make these in batches!</i></p> <p><b>Total carbs: 43g</b></p>	



## WEDNESDAY

### Breakfast

**Farmer's breakfast** made with 2 slices bacon or other breakfast meats

1-2 eggs, cooked in any style

½ cup sautéed spinach or other greens

1 slice whole grain toast

**Total carbs: 20g**

### Lunch

**Burrito bowl** made with 1 cup cauliflower rice, 4-5oz taco meat, 1 cup sautéed vegetables, ½ cup black beans, 2 tbsp salsa, and 1 tbsp sour cream

1 small fruit

**Total carbs: 42g**

### Dinner

#### 4-5oz Grilled/baked fish

2 cups baked/grilled non-starchy vegetables sprinkled with 1oz mixed nuts

½ cup sautéed corn or 1 small baked sweet potato

*Optional: add 1 tbsp sour cream or butter*

**Total carbs: 32g**



## THURSDAY

### Breakfast

**Oatmeal** (½ cup rolled/steel cut oats, cooked in water, topped with ½ cup berries and 1oz walnuts)

2 boiled eggs

**Total carbs: 38g**

### Lunch

#### 2 cups chickpea and vegetable soup

Side spring salad with 1oz feta cheese or nuts

**Total carbs: 25g**

### Dinner

**Low carb pizza** (bake low carb tortilla wrap or homemade cauliflower crust topped with ¼ cup sauce, ½ cup shredded cheese, meats, and diced vegetables)

**Total carbs: 30-45g**



## FRIDAY

### Breakfast

**Smoothie** (blend 1 cup unsweetened almond milk, 1 cup fresh spinach, 1-2 scoops protein powder, ½ banana, ½ cup berries, and 1 tbsp chia seeds or flax meal)

OR ready-made protein shake (check nutrition label for carb content). Can add a small piece of fruit or ½-¾ cup berries

**Total carbs: 21g**

### Lunch

#### 1 cup tuna salad/chicken salad/egg salad

Serve over 2 cups of mixed leafy greens, or make into a wrap or sandwich using low carb bread

*Optional: 1oz cheese, walnuts, or almonds*

Serve with 1 cup mixed fruit

**Total carbs: 25g (44g with wrap)**

### Dinner

#### 4-5oz steak

Roasted Brussels sprouts (10)

1 small baked potato

*Optional: 1 tbsp sour cream or 1oz shredded cheese*

**Total carbs: 30g**



## SATURDAY

### Breakfast

**Egg bites** (whisk together 2-3 eggs, chopped onion, peppers, tomato, spinach, mushrooms, seasoning, and 1-2oz cheese of choice. Pour mixture into muffin tin and bake at 350 degrees for 15-20 min or until set)

1 small fruit

**Total carbs: 20g**

### Lunch

**Cobb salad** (2-3 cups lettuce or salad mix, 4-5oz diced chicken or tuna, ½ diced avocado, tomatoes, cucumber, and 2 tbsp blue cheese dressing. Add ⅔ cup cooked quinoa)

**Total carbs: 42-45g**

### Dinner

**Chicken fajitas** (4-5oz chicken, 1 cup sautéed non-starchy vegetables, 2 tbsp sour cream, and ½ avocado. Serve with 1-2 low carb tortilla wraps)

**Total carbs: 48g**



# 7-DAY SAMPLE MEAL PLAN

## Lacto-Ovo Vegetarian Low Carb Meal Plan (50-130g per day)

50-130g  
per day

Are you wondering what to eat on a low carbohydrate lifestyle? Look no further! Here is a sample Lacto-Ovo Vegetarian 7-day meal plan to get you started. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals are listed below with total carbohydrate estimates.

SUNDAY		
Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
<p><b>1 cup plain Greek yogurt</b> topped with 1oz mixed nuts and ¼ cup blueberries</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 20g</b></p>	<p><b>Quinoa bowl</b> (¾ cup cooked quinoa, ½ cup baked marinated tofu, ½ cup roasted sweet potato cubes, 1 cup lightly sautéed kale, 2 tbsp oil and vinegar dressing)</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 56g</b></p>	<p><b>Cauliflower dal</b> and lentil curry made by simmering a large head of chopped cauliflower, red lentils, garlic, and onion in a large pot with stock. Add in your favorite spices and finish off sautéed garlicky spinach</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 45g</b></p>
MONDAY		
Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
<p><b>Tofu scramble.</b> Crumble a block of extra firm tofu and sauté with diced vegetables. Flavor with turmeric, garlic, onion, and cayenne powder. Serve with sliced avocado and some fruit</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 25g</b></p>	<p><b>Egg bites.</b> Whisk together 3 eggs, chopped onion, peppers, spinach, mushrooms, seasoning, and 1-2oz cheese. Pour mixture into muffin tin and bake at 350 degrees for 20 min or until set</p> <p><i>Serve with side salad (spring mix, olive oil, lemon juice, salt/pepper, almonds)</i></p> <p><b>Total carbs: 20g</b></p>	<p><b>Chickpea and tomato stew.</b> Simmered chickpeas in a rich tomato sauce with onions, garlic, bell pepper, and spices (cumin, paprika, coriander). Stir in fresh or frozen spinach and cook additional 5 min. Top with chopped almonds</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 47g</b></p>
TUESDAY		
Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
<p><b>Moroccan-style eggs.</b> Cook low-sugar marinara with diced bell pepper and onion. Cook until soft. Create 2-3 wells using the back of a spoon and crack an egg into each. Cover and simmer for 4-6 min or until desired doneness</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 25g</b></p>	<p><b>Black bean salad.</b> Over a bed of leafy greens, sprinkle your favorite toppings like ½ cup black beans, ¼ cup avocado, tomato, cucumber, 2 tbsp salsa, ¼ cup cheese, and dressing (try ranch or lemon and olive oil vinaigrette)</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 44g</b></p>	<p><b>Spaghetti squash</b> with lentil sauce. Cook diced onion, garlic, celery, and mushrooms in olive oil. Add brown lentils and a can of crushed tomatoes. Simmer on low for 20 min. Season and serve over a bed of spaghetti squash or other low carb pastas (like Palmini)</p> <p><b>Total carbs: 53g</b></p>

## WEDNESDAY

### Breakfast

**Chia pudding bowl.** Combine ¼ cup chia seeds with 1 cup unsweetened almond/soy milk. Mix and refrigerate for 2 hrs or overnight. Top with ¾ cup plain Greek yogurt, ½ cup berries, and 1 oz nuts

**Total carbs: 26g**

### Lunch

**Creamy white bean soup.** In a large pot, cook chopped onion, garlic, carrots, and celery in olive oil. Add in 2 cans of white beans, 5 cups broth, and 1 can coconut milk. Simmer for 20 min and season to taste. Add 3 cups chopped kale or collards and some lemon juice  
*Delicious with cheese crisps!*

**Total carbs: 28g**

### Dinner

**Roasted chickpea and tempeh bowl.** Place diced cauliflower, cubed tempeh, and a can of drained chickpeas on a tray. Coat with olive oil and season as desired. Bake at 375 degrees for 30 min. Serve with a creamy yogurt dressing and chopped cilantro. *Optional dessert: ½ cup berries and whipped cream*

**Total carbs: 43g**

## THURSDAY

### Breakfast

**Blueberry cheesecake smoothie.** Combine 6oz silken tofu, ½ banana, 1oz cream cheese, 1 cup blueberries, and 2/3 cup unsweetened soy or almond milk. Blend with ice cubes and serve

**Total carbs: 45g**

### Lunch

**Egg salad lettuce boats.** Hard boil 3-4 eggs, peel and mash together with ½ cup mayonnaise, 1.5 tsp mustard, 1 sliced green onion, diced celery, and chopped chives or dill. Spoon over romaine lettuce 'cups' and serve

**Total carbs: 25g**

### Dinner

**Grilled tofu skewers.** Marinate tofu chunks in a peanut sauce. Assemble skewers with tofu, onion, zucchini, mushrooms, bell peppers. Grill or roast in the oven (375 degrees for 10-15min) until golden. Serve with cooked quinoa

**Total carbs: 55g**

## FRIDAY

### Breakfast

**PBJ overnight oats.** Combine 1 cup rolled oats, 2 tbsp chia seeds, ½ cup plain Greek yogurt, 1.5 cups unsweetened soy or almond milk, cinnamon powder and 2 tbs peanut butter. Refrigerate overnight

Top with mashed raspberries and serve

**Total carbs: 49g**

### Lunch

**Taco salad.** Crumble a block of tofu, cook and flavor with taco seasoning. Make your taco bowl with shredded lettuce and top with tofu, guacamole, sour cream, salsa, cheese, diced onions, cilantro, and a squeeze of lime

**Total carbs: 17g**

### Dinner

**Lentil sloppy joes.** Cook diced bell peppers and onion in olive oil. Add brown lentils, stock, and canned crushed tomatoes. Season to taste with chili powder and spices. Add stevia for some sweetness. Simmer on low for 1hr

Serve over cooked greens or roasted jicama/kohlrabi

**Total carbs: 45g**

## SATURDAY

### Breakfast

**Egg scramble.** Whisk 3 eggs and set aside. Saute diced onion and bell peppers in olive oil, then add the eggs and stir to cook. Fold in spinach and shredded cheese

Serve with sliced apples or berries

**Total carbs: 24g**

### Lunch

**Chickpea salad.** On a bed of spinach, add diced bell pepper, onion, tomato, ½ cup chickpeas, avocado, and sliced almonds. Sprinkle feta cheese or cheese of choice. Season and toss with lemon and olive oil dressing

**Total carbs: 37g**

### Dinner

**Black bean burrito bowl.** Cook cauliflower rice and serve in a bowl. Top with seasoned black beans, diced onion, cheese, guacamole, salsa, sour cream, and cilantro. Sautéed onions and peppers are delicious too!

**Total carbs: 41g**



# LOW CARB GROCERY SHOPPING LIST

Stock your fridge and pantry with low carb foods

## Meats & Meat Alternatives

Beef (ground, steaks, ribs, or roast)  
Chicken/Turkey  
Duck  
Lamb  
Pork (ground, chops, ribs, or roast)  
Veal  
Goat  
Venison or other game  
Tempeh with no starches added  
Tofu with no starches added

## Dairy

(no added sugars or starches)  
Butter  
Cheeses (full-fat – all types)  
Cottage cheese  
Cream cheese  
Eggs  
Cream (heavy or whipping)  
Ricotta  
Sour cream  
Yogurt (unsweetened Greek)

## Fats & Oils

Avocado/Avocado oil  
Coconut oil  
Ghee/Lard  
Olives/Olive oil  
Sesame oil  
Canola oil  
Nut and seed oils



## Deli counter

(no added sugars or starches)  
Egg salad  
Tuna salad  
Chicken salad  
Deli meat (best choices are low sodium)

## Canned or packaged meats & seafood

(no added sugars or starches)  
Anchovies  
Sardines  
Canned tuna, mackerel, salmon, or crab  
Canned chicken  
Meat jerky (check labels for carb content)



## Beverages

Water (still, sparkling, fruit/herb infused)  
Coffee (any unsweetened variety)  
Tea (any unsweetened variety)  
Carbonated beverages with no added sugar  
Unsweetened almond milk  
Unsweetened soy milk

## Vegetables

Artichoke  
Arugula  
Asparagus  
Baby corn  
Bean sprouts  
Broccoli  
Bok choy  
Brussels sprouts  
Cabbage

## Seafood

Crab  
Fish of all types  
Lobster  
Mussels  
Octopus  
Oysters  
Scallops  
Shrimp  
Squid



## Vegetables (cont.)

Cauliflower  
Celery  
Collards  
Cucumber  
Eggplant  
Fennel  
Fresh herbs  
Garlic  
Ginger  
Green/red chillies  
Greens (all types)  
Green beans  
Green onions/chives  
Kale  
Kohlrabi  
Leeks  
Lettuces of all types  
Mushrooms  
Okra  
Onions  
Peppers (all varieties)  
Radishes  
Rhubarb  
Rutabaga  
Seaweed  
Shallots  
Snap peas/snow peas  
Sprouts  
Sugar snap peas  
Swiss chard  
Tomatoes  
Turnips  
Watercress  
Zucchini



## Canned & Pantry Items

Alfredo sauce  
Artichoke hearts  
Broth or bouillon cube  
Bone broth  
Capers  
Canned/crushed tomatoes  
Canned beans/lentils  
Canned vegetables  
Chipotle peppers  
Coconut milk  
Evaporated milk  
Nut butters  
Olives

Pasta sauce  
Pesto  
Roasted red peppers  
Salad dressing  
Soy sauce/tamari  
Sun dried tomatoes  
Tomato paste  
Vinegar

**Tip:** Always check the nutrition label of packaged items for accurate carb content.



## Cooking & baking items

Almond and coconut flour  
Cocoa powder  
Dark chocolate (80% or greater)  
Spices and herbs  
Sugar substitutes (stevia, monk fruit, erythritol etc.)  
Vanilla and almond extract

## Condiments

Guacamole/salsa  
Horseradish  
Hot sauce  
Pickles  
Mayonnaise/mustard  
Kimchi  
Sauerkraut



## Nuts & seeds

Almonds  
Brazil nuts  
Chia seeds  
Flax seeds  
Hazelnuts  
Hemp seeds  
Macadamia nuts  
Peanuts  
Pecans/walnuts  
Pumpkin seeds  
Sunflower seeds



## Other

Protein powders and shakes (check labels)  
Psyllium husk powder  
Hearts of palm noodles and rice  
Shirataki/konjac noodles and rice  
Spiralized vegetable noodles  
Spaghetti squash  
Low carb products (check labels)

## Starchy vegetables

Beans  
Beets  
Carrots  
Corn  
Green peas  
Lentils  
Potatoes/Sweet potatoes  
Squash  
Taro  
Yams



## Higher Carb Foods

### Whole grains

Brown rice  
Barley  
Farro  
Quinoa  
Oats

### Fruits

Apples  
Banana  
Berries (all kinds)  
Canned fruit (in water)  
Cherries

Kiwi  
Lemons/limes  
Mango  
Peach  
Pear  
Plum

Pineapple  
Watermelon  
Orange  
Grapes



# LOW CARB SNACK IDEAS

Try some of these delicious snack options

As you make your grocery list, consider adding some tasty low carbohydrate snacks from the list below or look for more snack options from our recommended resources!

- ☐ Boiled eggs
- ☐ String cheese or 1-1.5oz cheese (2 dice-sized cubes)
- ☐ Chicken/tuna/egg salad, served with vegetable slices like cucumbers, bell peppers, celery
- ☐ Palmful of nuts/seeds (1oz) - walnuts, almonds, pecans, sunflower/pumpkin seeds, etc.
- ☐ Plain Greek yogurt with  $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$  cup berries
- ☐ Vegetable platter with dip (ranch, spinach and artichoke dip, etc.)
- ☐ Mini meat and cheese board with olives/nuts/vegetables
- ☐ Roast beef with mustard/horseradish
- ☐ Meat jerky (with no added sugars)
- ☐ Low carbohydrate smoothie ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup plain Greek yogurt,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup berries, 1 cup coconut milk, 1 handful ice cubes, stevia to taste) or ready-made low carbohydrate shake
- ☐ Tortilla 'chips' made with sliced low carbohydrate tortillas (bake 8-10 min or until golden at 400 degrees), served with guacamole or salsa dip
- ☐ Celery sticks with natural unsweetened peanut/almond butter
- ☐ Sugar free Jell-o cup
- ☐ Sliced apples and cheese
- ☐ Turkey roll-ups (roll up 1oz of sliced turkey in lettuce leaves with mustard, avocado, and cheese)



Scan the QR code to find snack lists!





# MAKE IT YOUR OWN

## Customize your low carb lifestyle to fit your preferences

Starting a low carb lifestyle doesn't mean you have to give up all the foods you like or are used to eating. There are many ways to adapt your favorite foods to fit within a low carb lifestyle. We have created some of these resources to help you get started.

**Southern United States Cuisine**

**FIND AN ALTERNATIVE FOR...**

**CORNMEAL OR CORN FLOUR:** Swap cornmeal with almond flour to make cornbread. Recipe for low carb cornbread from Wholesome Yum: [michmed.org/w8740](http://michmed.org/w8740). Try this interesting spin on low carb grits using ground lupin beans from Keto Focus: Keto Grits Recipe (only 3g net carbs & NUT FREE): [michmed.org/3x25w](http://michmed.org/3x25w)

**MAC AND CHEESE:** Swap pasta with cut up cauliflower. Recipe for cauliflower mac and cheese from Wholesome Yum: [michmed.org/89JlR](http://michmed.org/89JlR)

**POTATO DISHES LIKE:** Swap potatoes for these other vegetables. Cauliflower (Creamy mash "potato" salad), Kohlrabi (Roast/pan-fry/stew), Daikon radish (Roast/pan-fry/stew), Jicama (Roast/pan-fry/stew), Turnip (Roast/pan-fry/stew)

**SWEET BBQ SAUCE ON:** Add sugar-free flavor to your meats. Dry spice rubs or marinades. Sugar-free BBQ sauce (e.g., G Hughes BBQ sauce)

**Examples of low carb Southern United States cuisine:**  
Note: All carb counts are estimates and may vary depending on ingredients used. \*Serves 10 (moderation based on your carb goal)

Beef brisket or slow cooked pork (1 cup)	2g carbs
Tomato and okra stew (½ cup)	6.5g carbs
Cooked greens (1 cup) (collards, turnip/mustard greens)	7.5g carbs
Southern-style green beans (1 cup)	10g carbs
Southern-style bean stew* (½ cup) (fava beans, pinto beans, black-eyed peas)	~25g carbs

Baked sweet potatoes\* (½ cup) 29g carbs

## Celebrating Food Diversity Booklet

[michmed.org/reGeR](http://michmed.org/reGeR)

It can be easier to make changes to your eating patterns and stick to them if they fit with your lifestyle, preferences, and family and cultural traditions. This booklet includes some ideas for low carb adaptations influenced by diverse global cuisines and regions to help spark ideas for adapting your favorite meals.



Scan the QR code to download the booklet!

**7-DAY SAMPLE MEAL PLAN**  
Low Carb South Asian Meal Plan (Non-Vegetarian)

Here is a sample 7-day meal plan inspired by South Asian cuisine for those who are interested in following a low-carbohydrate meal plan. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals are listed below with total carbohydrate estimates.

Find these recipes in detail and snack options at [michmed.org/w874m](http://michmed.org/w874m)

**SUNDAY**

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Egg Bhurji made with 3 eggs, diced onion, tomato, and green bell pepper, and spices. Serve with ½ cup sliced mango.	Rufio Fish Curry made with 1lb fish, diced onion, tomatoes, and spices. Serve with 2 low carb roti.	Paneer Bindi Masoor made with 4 cups shredded cauliflower, 1 cup green peas, diced onion and tomato, and spices. Serve with 2 low carb roti.
Total carbs: 32g	Total carbs: 20g	Total carbs: 45g

**MONDAY**

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Low Carb Uttamam made with 1½ cups almond flour, 1 cup coconut milk, ½ cup diced onion, ½ cup green chili, and spices. Roast made with 3 chopped tomatoes, 2 cups of water, and an assortment of spices.	Musala Bhindi made with 2 cups bhindi/okra, diced vegetables, and spices. Serve with 2 low carb roti.	Chicken and cauliflower rice bhajant made with 1½ lb boneless chicken, ½ cup Greek yogurt, 4 cups cauliflower rice, and spices. Kachumber salad made with 1 cup diced cucumber, 1 cup diced tomato, ½ cup diced onion, and fresh herbs.
Total carbs: 34g	Total carbs: 45g	Total carbs: 28g

**TUESDAY**

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
1 medium dosa* approx. 10-inch "non swap" with 2 low-carb roti for less carbs. Musala Bhindi made with 2 cups bhindi/okra, diced vegetables, and spices. Serving with 2 tbsp coriander chutney and 2 tbsp fresh curd.	Egg Curry made with 3 eggs, 1 onion cut into quarters, 2 tomatoes cut into quarters, 1 green chili, and spices. Serve with 2 low carb roti.	Chicken Tikka Massala made with 1½ lb boneless chicken, 1 green bell pepper, 1 red bell pepper, 1 onion, and a tikka spice blend. Paneer Tikka skewers made with 1½ cups paneer and spices. Serve with 2 cup spiced cauliflower rice and mint chutney.
Total carbs: 48g	Total carbs: 32g	Total carbs: 21g

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## South Asian Meal Plan (Vegetarian and Non-Vegetarian)

7-day sample meal plan inspired by South Asian cuisine. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals are listed with total carbohydrate estimates.

**Hispanic Meal Ideas**  
7-DAY LOW CARB SAMPLE MEAL PLAN

Here is a sample 7-day meal plan inspired by Hispanic cuisine for those interested in a low carbohydrate (carb) lifestyle. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals are listed below with total carb estimates.

Find these recipes in detail and snack options at [michmed.org/w874m](http://michmed.org/w874m)

**SUNDAY**

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Huevos Banderos: 2 scrambled eggs, ½ tomato diced, ½ onion diced, ½ green bell pepper diced, olive oil, and salt and pepper to taste. Substitute vegetables with any you like.	Tortilla Soup with Queso Pasa and Avocado made with 2 corn tortillas (8" med), 1 tbsp queso fresco, ½ avocado in cubes, ½ poblano pepper, sliced, and 1 cup of tomato soup.	Shrimp and Mushroom Casserole with Garlic made with 2 tbsp olive oil, 3 cloves garlic, minced, ½ lb shrimp, ½ lb button mushrooms, 50 grams guajillo chili, juice of 1 lemon, ½ cup Panko breadcrumbs, salt and pepper to taste, 1.5 tbsp white wine.
Total carbs: 10g	Total carbs: 26g	Total carbs: 30g

**MONDAY**

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Chilaquiles: Fried tortilla strips with chicken made with 1 chicken breast, ½ onion, 1 clove garlic, 2 oz queso fresco, ½ cup sour cream, 120g tortilla chips (about 40 chips). Served with salsa.	Spanish Tortilla with Serrano Ham: Spanish style omelet casaca made with 3 tbsp olive oil, 1 large potato, ½ large onion, 1 green bell pepper, 1 green chili, 3 eggs, 1 oz serrano ham, sliced and a pinch of salt.	Low Carb Paella Soup made with 8 cups of water, 1 lb boneless chicken thighs, cut into chunks, ½ onion, sliced, 4 cloves garlic, sliced, 1 tbsp each thyme, marjoram, bay leaves, 2 cups tomato (220g), salt and pepper to taste.
Total carbs: 30g	Total carbs: 13g	Total carbs: 15g

**TUESDAY**

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Huevos Revueltos: Scrambled eggs with chorizo made with 2 eggs, black pepper, 2.5 oz (75 g) chorizo, ½ cup onion, finely diced, 2 corn tortillas (8" med).	Caldo de Olla: Comforting beef soup made with 1 lb beef, onion, garlic, guajillo peppers, 2 ears of corn, 2 serrano, 1 large potato, and salt and pepper to taste.	Agavehile de Pasa made with 1oz (100 g) 1 lb of serrano fresh fish, 1 cup (250 ml) lemon juice, salt and pepper to taste, olives, ½ cucumber, 1 green chili, 1 clove garlic, 1 oz (30g) white onion, 1 cup (250 ml) sparkling water, 2 oz (60g) net carbs, ½ avocado.
Total carbs: 20g	Total carbs: 22g	Total carbs: 10g

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## Hispanic Meal Plan

7-day sample meal plan inspired by Hispanic cuisine. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals are listed with total carbohydrate estimates.

Find these meal plans and more at [michmed.org/NrVrq](http://michmed.org/NrVrq)

Scan the QR code to these meal plans and more!



# CONNECT:

## Low Carb Lifestyle Resources



# LOW CARB LIFESTYLE RESOURCES

## Apps, websites, and videos

We know that a low carbohydrate lifestyle can come with many challenges. The following handout is designed to provide some additional resources to help you stay on track, learn additional information, and find recipes to help you enjoy your meals and achieve your goals!

### APPS

Keeping track of your food intake can help you stay within your carbohydrate goals. One of the easiest ways to track your meals, snacks, and beverages is through the use of an application (app).

Most apps are free to download and user-friendly. These tracking tools can be especially helpful during the early stages of your low carbohydrate journey. They can help you determine your baseline carbohydrate intake, understand what foods contain carbohydrates, and adjust your meals to the right level for you. Below are a few examples of food tracking apps:

**Quick tip:** One of the easiest ways to look up carbs is through a Google Search. Simply type "Carbs in [food item]" into the Google search bar.

Banana / Carbohydrate Amount	
27 g	
Total Carbohydrate	
Type	Quantity
Bananas	1 medium (7" to 7-7/8" long)



#### Carb Manager [carbmanager.com](http://carbmanager.com)

Carb Manager is a highly recommended smartphone app for low and very low carb dietary plans. The app's features include nutrition and food trackers, recipe database, personalized meal plans, educational materials and a supportive community.

*\$ Optional paid membership*



#### MyFitnessPal [myfitnesspal.com](http://myfitnesspal.com)

MyFitnessPal is another highly recommended diet and exercise tracking app. The app allows you to easily log foods and exercise, with detailed nutrition information. You can create personalized meal plans, grocery shopping lists, and exercise plans.

*\$ Optional paid membership*



#### Senza [senza.us](http://senza.us)

Senza is a one-stop shop for everything Keto. The app offers nutrition tracking, meal planning, and helps you find low carbohydrate foods at nearby restaurants.

*\$ Free with optional purchases*



#### Lose It! [loseit.com](http://loseit.com)

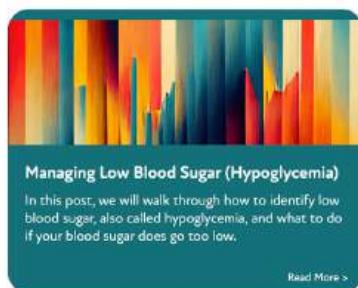
Lose It offers free and easy to use food and nutrition tracking options. The app also offers weight loss support.

*\$ Optional paid membership*



## WEBSITES & VIDEOS

Whether you are a visual learner or enjoy watching videos to absorb additional information, there are plenty of resources explaining the science behind low carbohydrate meal plans and additional advice on many topics relating to the low-carbohydrate lifestyle.



### JUMPSTART Blog

[jumpstart.mct2d.org/learn/blog](http://jumpstart.mct2d.org/learn/blog)

Find helpful quick-read articles on topics like managing low blood sugar, low carb on a budget, eating low carb at fast food restaurants, and more.



**Diet Doctor** [dietdoctor.com](http://dietdoctor.com)

Diet Doctor is one of the most well-known websites for low and very low carb (keto) dietary plans. This is a great resource for recipes, education, meal plans, and more. Diet Doctor aims to provide unbiased and evidence-based information, as well as free and inspiring tools to help people improve their health.

*\$ Optional paid membership*

### ruled.me [ruled.me](http://ruled.me)

This website offers many tools, tips, and easy-to-read articles on starting a keto diet. We recommend checking out their keto food pyramid.



**Diet Doctor Informational Videos**  
[youtube.com/c/DietDoctorVideo](https://youtube.com/c/DietDoctorVideo)



**Dr. Eric Westman's Adapt Your Life**  
[youtube.com/c/AdaptYourLife](https://youtube.com/c/AdaptYourLife)



**Low Carb Meal Prep Recipes by Sweet Peas Saffron**  
[youtube.com/watch?v=MdarLkKDjWA](https://youtube.com/watch?v=MdarLkKDjWA)

**Virta Health Blog**  
[virtahealth.com/blog](https://virtahealth.com/blog)

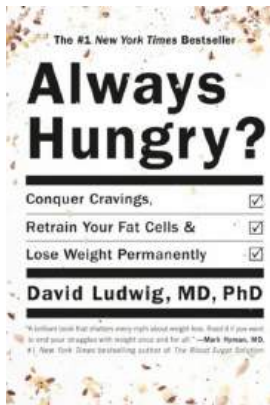
This blog offers a robust selection of articles, tips, and stories from patients with type 2 diabetes.

# LOW CARB LIFESTYLE RESOURCES

## Books and recipe blogs

### BOOKS

#### Always Hungry?



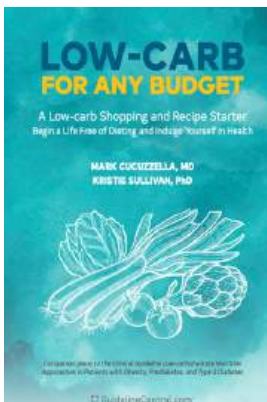
By Dr. David Ludwig

Always Hungry? changes how we think about dieting with a three-phase program that ignores calories and targets fat cells directly. The recipes and meal plan include luscious high-fat foods (like nuts and nut butters, full-fat dairy, avocados, and dark chocolate), savory proteins, and natural

carbohydrates. This program will help achieve weight loss and reduce carbs without battling cravings and constant hunger.

#### Low Carb for Any Budget (Free ebook)

By Mark Cucuzzella, MD and Kristie Sullivan, PhD



[cookingketowithkristie.com](http://cookingketowithkristie.com)

This free ebook is full of information about getting started on low carb and includes shopping lists along with two dozen simple recipes to help you get started.

All of the ingredients in these recipes can be purchased at stores like Dollar General or Dollar Tree,

which are easy to find even in rural locations. You also don't need a lot of fancy equipment to make these recipes. Lastly, the recipes are intended to appeal to families, so if you have a picky eater at home, then you might find something they like.

### RECIPE BLOGS

**Are you looking for ways to cook simple yet delicious low carbohydrate meals?**

**Then look no further!** Use the resources below to find a large collection of recipes to suit your needs and taste buds, from quick and easy breakfasts to more elaborate low carbohydrate baked goods for those days you are feeling adventurous in the kitchen. You can also save time and money during the week by implementing some make-ahead and batch cooking strategies!

#### JUMPSTART Low Carb Recipes

[jumpstart.mct2d.org/cook](http://jumpstart.mct2d.org/cook)

Find dozens of simple, low carb recipes and shopping lists on the JUMPSTART website. Each recipe includes step-by-step instructions, nutrition information, and estimated time and cost.

#### Diabetes Food Hub

[diabetesfoodhub.org/all-recipes.html](http://diabetesfoodhub.org/all-recipes.html)

An enticing selection of delicious and diabetes-friendly recipes that includes nutritional information.

#### Cooking Keto With Kristie

[cookingketowithkristie.com/recipes](http://cookingketowithkristie.com/recipes)

A list of Kristie's favorite low carb recipes, including excellent dessert options.

#### Wholesome Yum

[wholesomeyum.com](http://wholesomeyum.com)

A diverse selection of low carb recipes with 10 ingredients or less. Check out their delicious low carb snack list.



## THE LOW CARB JUMPSTART



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