

The saying “*knowledge is power*” can be true when it comes to lifestyle strategies for managing chronic illnesses such as type 2 diabetes (T2D). But how do we fit the time to talk about nutrition with patients when there is so much to cover in a visit? The good news is that nutrition talk does not need to take up your entire visit. What you say and how you say it in a few minutes can help patients feel more engaged and empowered to take charge of their health.



## Your words have power!

This tool is designed for clinicians interested in practical strategies on low carb nutrition counseling (<130g total carbs/day) that can be delivered to patients during your office visit. Remember that you don't need to use all the recommendations in a single visit.

## Low Carb Eating 101

### Recommendations for Patients



1. Aim for **100-130 grams total carbohydrates** per day.



2. Consider **tracking food intake** on paper or an app to bring awareness to eating patterns and track carb intake.



3. Get started by **switching one meal at a time** from high carb to low carb. For example, switch breakfast to scrambled eggs with veggies or plain yogurt with berries in place of cereal or pastries.



4. Anchor meals around a protein source: aim for **20-30g of protein per meal**.



5. Pair meals and snacks with **non-starchy vegetables** like green beans, broccoli, cauliflower, spinach, zucchini, asparagus etc.



6. Use **fats for flavor and satiety** like nuts, seeds, avocado, olives, and dairy.



7. Choose **minimally processed carbohydrates** like beans & lentils, starchy vegetables (sweet potatoes, squash etc.), quinoa, oats, and fruits.



8. Prioritize **unsweetened/zero calorie beverages**: still or sparkling water, coffee, tea etc.

## Clinician Strategies to Support Patients

- ★ **Help patients identify the easiest changes to make based on their baseline intake.** Examples: swap starches with non-starchy vegetables, pack lunches instead of fast food, replace high carb with low-carb snacks, switch to zero calorie beverages.
- ★ **Refer to Nutrition Services/Care Managers.** Encourage your patients to meet with a dietitian, diabetes educator, or care manager to follow-up on their nutrition care plan.
- ★ **Remind your patients that every small step counts!** Encourage patients to focus on small, achievable goals. Progress matters more than perfection, and lasting change takes time.

## ★ Share MCT2D's Resources

Getting Started on a Low Carb Lifestyle for Type 2 Diabetes  
[michmed.org/9ZGW5](https://michmed.org/9ZGW5)



Low Carb Cheatsheet  
[michmed.org/XG8yD](https://michmed.org/XG8yD)



Low Carb Grocery Shopping List  
[michmed.org/NyMvj](https://michmed.org/NyMvj)



Building Your Plate: 4-Step Process to Low Carb Meals  
[michmed.org/bn8D8](https://michmed.org/bn8D8)



SatisfAI  
Low Carb Recipe Generator  
[jumpstart.mct2d.org/ai-chef](https://jumpstart.mct2d.org/ai-chef)



Low Carb JUMPSTART - A Lower Carb Lifestyle Website for Patients  
[michmed.org/xdMkv](https://michmed.org/xdMkv)

