Can Diabetics Eat Fruit?

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Diabetes and Fruit: Can Diabetics Eat Fruit?

You've probably heard diabetics should avoid fruit, while at the same time hearing that fruit is healthy and should be included in your diet. So, can diabetics eat fruit or not?

The answer is simple: you can eat fruit, however you should choose the fruit you eat wisely and pay attention to how much you eat.

Simply put, various fruits will have different amounts of carbohydrates. One serving of fruit contains 15 grams of carbohydrates, but the serving size will vary from fruit to fruit. For example, you will consume 15 grams of carbs if you eat half of a medium banana, half a cup of cubed mango or three-quarters of a cup of cubed pineapple.

About Fructose

Fructose is a type of sugar found in fruits and it can cause health issues, especially when is removed from the fruit, converted into high fructose corn syrup (HFCS) and included in many processed foods.

Fructose has been linked with weight gain, insulin resistance, high blood cholesterol levels, increased appetite, and other health issues.

Based on research done by Dr. B Clement from Hippocrates Institutes, the fruits we consume today undergo a process of hybridization, and so the amounts of fructose they contain are much higher. Our fruits are up to 50 times sweeter than the fruits consumed by our ancestors. They also have fewer healthy phytochemicals, making them overall less healthy.

Whole Fruit Versus Juice

The way you consume a fruit also makes a huge difference. Always choose to eat the whole fruit, as it is packed with fibers and antioxidants.

One study published in the British Medical Journal found that people who eat blueberries, grapes and prunes twice a week had 23% less chance of developing type 2 diabetes compared with those who ate fruits once a month or less.

If you consume fruit juice, the opposite is likely to happen. Another study found that those who consumed one or more servings of fruit juice daily had a 21% increased risk to develop diabetes, compared with those who did not consume juice.

Fruit juices contain much more fructose, which will spike your insulin levels right away. Many fruit juices have added sugar and high fructose corn syrup, as well as artificial flavors, colors, and preservatives.

Conclusions

Monitoring the carbohydrates in fruits is a good start towards better managing your diabetes. However, keep in mind that many other foods also contain carbs. Keep an eye on this list when you prepare meals.

You should also be aware that cooking or dehydrating the fruit will increase the carbohydrate content. Therefore you should always choose a fresh apple over a baked or dried apple (apple chips), for example. Canned fruits often contain extra sugar.

Healthy tip: Add a dash of cinnamon to your fruit. Cinnamon has been found to improve your blood glucose levels, and is also tasty and easy to incorporate in your diet.