



Diabetes, Protein & Pork

“Today, 11 million Canadians, including children and youth, are living with diabetes and pre-diabetes and this number is expected to grow.” (CDA, 2016) About 90 per cent of that 11 million have type 2 diabetes, a form that is largely preventable through lifestyle changes and a healthy diet.

Lean cuts of pork, such as tenderloin and loin cuts, are good choices for people living with diabetes. Diabetes is a lifelong – yet manageable – disease. Medication, exercise and food choices have a significant impact on blood sugar control.

KEY ELEMENTS IN DIABETES MANAGEMENT

Education: Diabetes education is an important first step. All people with diabetes need to be informed about their condition.

Nutrition: What, when and how much you eat all play an important role in regulating blood glucose levels.

Medication: Type 1 diabetes is always treated with insulin. Type 2 diabetes is managed through physical activity and meal planning, and may require medications and/or insulin to assist your body in controlling blood glucose more effectively.

Lifestyle management: Learning to reduce stress levels in day-to-day life can help people with diabetes better manage their disease.

Physical activity: Regular physical activity helps your body lower blood glucose levels, promotes weight loss, reduces stress and enhances overall fitness.

Weight management: Maintaining a healthy weight is especially important in the management of type 2 diabetes.

Blood pressure: High blood pressure can lead to eye disease, heart disease, stroke and kidney disease, so people with diabetes should try to maintain a blood pressure level at or below 130/80. To do this, you may need to change your eating and physical activity habits and/or take medication.



THE IMPORTANCE OF PROTEIN FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DIABETES

Tools that help manage a healthy eating pattern include the Glycemic Index (GI) and the Carbohydrate Counting Method. Visit the Canadian Diabetes Association’s website for more information on how to use these techniques to help manage blood sugar levels.

Protein-rich foods, such as pork and other meats, are an important source of energy. They make you feel fuller for longer and do not have much effect on blood sugars. Choose leaner cuts of pork and other meats, fish, low-fat dairy products, nuts and nut products, eggs, tofu and soy products. Beans, peas and lentils are better known for their starch content rather than their protein content. Choose low-GI foods most often.

Pork is naturally carbohydrate-free and has little effect on your blood sugar levels. As an excellent source of high quality protein, pork can be included in breakfast, lunch and dinner. Protein provides energy and has an important role in helping patients manage diabetes. Eating adequate protein at all meals slows digestion and will help individuals feel full longer.

NUTRITION AND WEIGHT MANAGEMENT IN DIABETES MANAGEMENT

Healthy weight: The most effective way to manage your blood sugar is to be at a healthy weight, or a healthier weight. If you are presently overweight, even a 10 per cent reduction in weight can benefit your blood sugars and general health.

Balanced diet: A good eating pattern for a person with diabetes will contain mostly high-fibre carbohydrate foods, including fruit and vegetables, be low in fat and provide adequate protein for good health.

NEW RESEARCH IN PROTEIN & DIABETES



Protein aids in weight management by helping to keep patients feeling fuller longer. This aids in maintaining a healthy body weight.

“Substantial evidence exists supporting the consumption of increased dietary protein as a successful strategy to prevent and/or treat obesity through improvements in weight management.” (Leidy, 2015) Higher protein diets lead to greater reductions in body weight and fat mass, concomitant with the retention of lean mass compared to standard protein diets. Furthermore, higher protein diets also prevent weight re-gain following weight loss. (Leidy, 2015)

The effectiveness of these diets may be due, in part, to the modulations in the signals that control appetite,

satiety and food cravings. Specifically, the consumption of higher protein meals leads to reductions in hunger, increases in fullness (satiety) and reductions in the neural activation in brain regions controlling food reward/cravings. These responses are particularly robust at the breakfast meal and lead to reductions in unhealthy evening snacking. (Leidy, 2015) Collectively, these data support the beneficial effects of increased dietary protein to modulate appetite control, satiety and weight management. (Leidy, 2015)

Evidence suggests that current protein Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs) have been underestimated using the nitrogen balance method. A new method using stable isotopes suggests that the DRIs should be higher.

Dietary protein forms an essential component of a healthy diet in humans. The Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs) sets recommendations at a population level to ensure adequate intakes of protein from healthy food sources. The current recommendations for adults are set based on studies conducted using the nitrogen balance method in healthy adults, the limitations of which are well known.

Recently, with the use of state-of-the-art, stable isotope-based techniques, the protein requirements have been re-examined in healthy adults, children, pregnant women, the elderly and in childhood disease. The results suggest that the current recommendations may be significantly underestimated. Furthermore, there is recent evidence that adequate protein intake during various life cycle stages could affect long-term health outcomes. (Elango, 2015)

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