

# Healthy Eating For Impaired Glucose Tolerance



Produced by: The Department of Nutrition and Dietetics  
Poole Hospital and The Community and  
Specialist Dietetic Service for East Dorset

## What is Impaired Glucose Tolerance?

Impaired glucose tolerance ( IGT) is a condition in which the amount of sugar ( glucose) in the blood is starting to get to high.

## Does this mean I have Diabetes?

No. You do not have diabetes or borderline diabetes. With IGT there is an increased risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes. The good news is that by eating a healthy diet, losing some weight if you need to and being more active will reduce your risk of developing diabetes and heart disease.

This leaflet aims to give you the information you need to start making the changes to your lifestyle.

## The main recommendations are

- Eat regular meals
- Take Regular Exercise
- Limit sugar and sugary foods
- Try to eat less fat and include monounsaturated fat in preference to saturated fat
- Include oily fish
- Increase fibre intake by including high fibre starchy foods, fruit and vegetables
- Eat less salt
- Alcohol can be included in moderation

## Lose weight if you need to

Losing weight, if you need to may help to prevent diabetes and also improve your heart health.

You don't have to reach your 'ideal' weight to start seeing benefits to your health, so set yourself a realistic target as your initial goal (e.g. 3 - 6 kgs / ½ - 1 stone). Even maintaining your weight is a good start if your weight is currently increasing.

Focus on making changes to your diet and activity levels that you know you can sustain and aim for a steady weight loss of between 0.25 - 1kg / ½ - 2lb per week.

You may also find it useful to monitor your progress through keeping a food and activity diary and checking your weight on a regular basis.

Enlisting some support is also important, perhaps through a friend, family member, group or health professional.



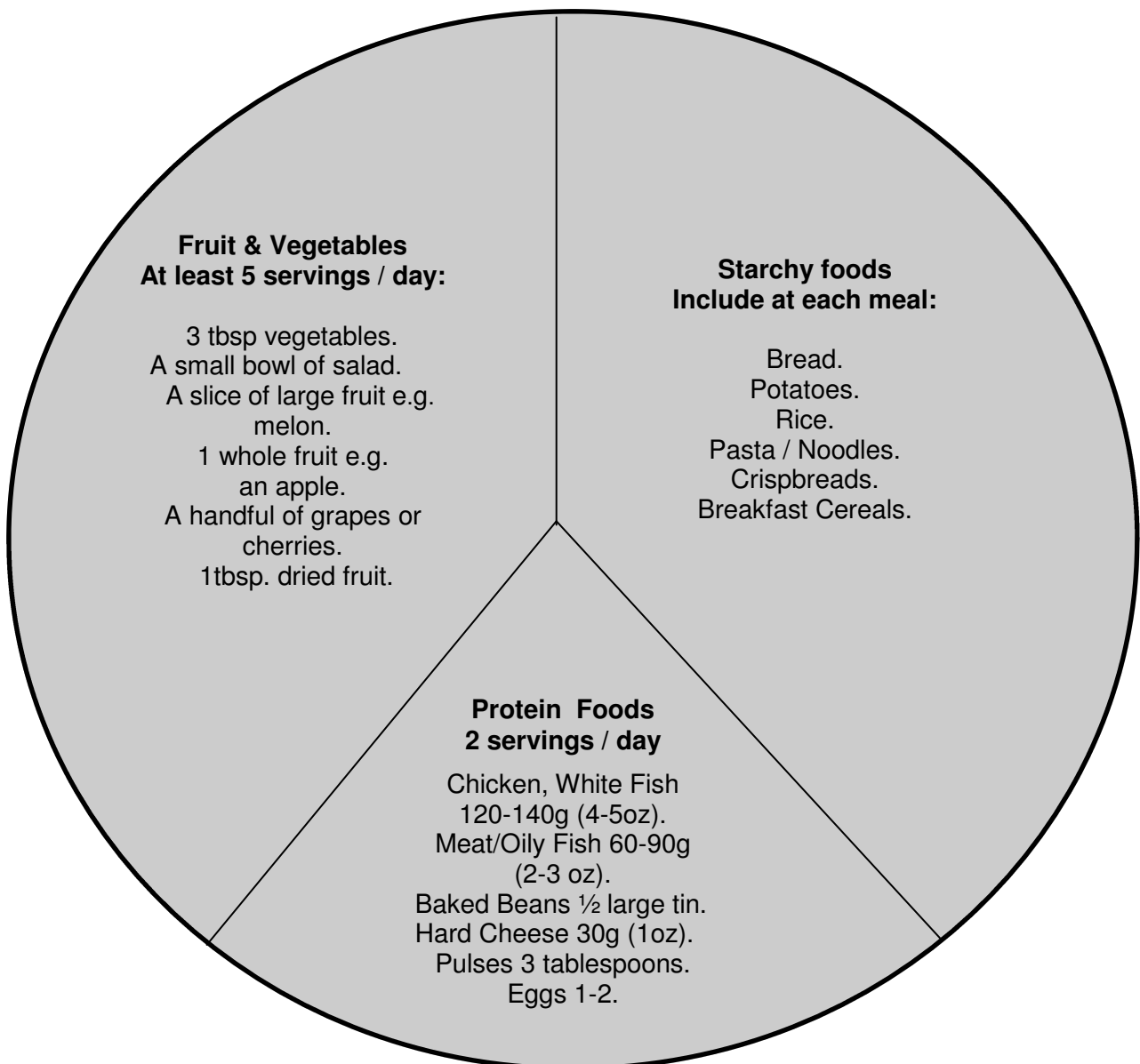
## Be more Active

- Regular exercise can help reduce your risk of going on to develop diabetes, help you to lose weight and keep your heart healthy.
- We should all aim to do at least 30 minutes of exercise on 5 or more days of the week. The level of exercise should be moderate. This means that you will be breathing harder and getting warmer but still be able to talk at the same time as exercising.
- If you have not been active for some time, start gently and build up slowly. It is also important to check with your doctor before starting any exercise programme if you have any other health problems, including high blood pressure.
- If you haven't exercised for a while, even small changes can be beneficial, e.g. walk short distances instead of using the car, use the stairs instead of the lift, or get off the bus one stop earlier.
- Remember to warm up and slow down before and after your activity. This allows your heart rate to increase and decrease gradually.
- Choose activities that you can enjoy. You might consider walking, dancing, swimming, cycling or gardening.
- Exercise on prescription is a programme available at local sports centres that can give you individualised exercise and advice at a reduced cost. Ask at your GP surgery for more information.



## Eat regular well balanced meals

Aim to eat 3 meals a day. The balance of your meals is also important. The plate below shows the balance to aim for at your lunch and evening meals. If you are wanting to lose weight the fruit and vegetable section can be increased to cover half your plate and the starchy and protein foods reduced to cover a quarter of the plate each.



## Reduce your sugar intake

Some sugar can be included as part of a healthy well balanced diet, however it is important to avoid eating large amounts of added sugar and sugary foods, especially as some of these foods will be high in fat and calories as well. Instead aim to include lower sugar, healthier alternatives:

- If necessary use an artificial sweetener instead like Canderel, Splenda, Hermesetas. Granulated sweeteners can be used on cereal or added to desserts after cooking and in hot drinks
- Choose low calorie or diet fizzy drinks or no added sugar and sugar-free drinks or squashes.
- Use only small amounts of jam and marmalade.
- Cut down on cakes, biscuits, sweets and chocolate. Healthier options include English muffins, teacakes, crumpets, or fruit loaf.
- Have fruit as snacks if hungry between meals.
- Opt for very low fat, virtually fat free, diet yogurts and fromage frais.

### Ideas for dessert

All varieties of fresh, stewed or tinned fruit in natural juice.

Serve with natural low fat yoghurt, diet fruit yoghurts or fromage frais, sugar-free dessert mixes e.g. no added sugar instant whip, sugar-free jelly or sugar free custard.

Low fat milk puddings e.g. rice pudding, semolina or tapioca. Use an artificial sweetener or dried fruit to add extra sweetness.

Occasionally you can include other desserts e.g. ice cream, fruit pie or crumble. If making it yourself consider using less sugar and fat.



### Sweeteners

Sweeteners such as Canderel, Hermesetas, Splenda and Sweetex can be included as part of a well balanced diet.

Some types of sweeteners should be added at the end of cooking as they are bitter after being heated at a high temperature, so always read the information on the label about how to use a sweetener.

### “Diabetic” Products

There is no need to buy these foods. Biscuits, cakes, sweets and chocolates containing fructose or sorbitol will still be high in calories, are expensive and may have a laxative effect. Suitable alternatives that are cheaper and healthier e.g. plain biscuits and reduced sugar jams are available from the supermarket.

## Cut back on fat

Fat is high in calories so cutting down on your total fat intake will help you to lose weight, which in turn will reduce your risk of developing diabetes.

It is particularly important to cut down on *saturated fat* as this type of fat can cause your blood cholesterol levels to rise, increasing your risk of heart disease.

Saturated fats are found in animal fats such as lard and butter, fatty meats and full fat dairy products. Palm oil and coconut oil are also high in saturated fats.

Small amounts of unsaturated fats can be used in place of saturated fats. There are two types of unsaturated fats:

- *monounsaturated* fats e.g. olive oil and rapeseed oil
- *polyunsaturated* fats e.g. sunflower oil and corn oil.

Research suggests that monounsaturated fats are the best type of fats to use. These still need to be used sparingly as they contain just as many calories as saturated and polyunsaturated fats.

The oily fish such as sardines, salmon, pilchards, herring, trout, fresh tuna and mackerel contain omega 3 fats which are protective against heart disease. Aim to include the oily fish twice a week. If choosing tinned varieties drain any oil or brine that the fish is tinned in.

## How to limit the amount of fat you eat

- Grill, bake, microwave, poach, dry roast or casserole instead of frying.
- Try monounsaturated fats such as Bertolli and supermarkets own olive spread. If you are trying to lose weight opt for a low fat spread, such as Flora lite.
- Use skimmed or semi-skimmed milk.
- Use lean cuts of meat and trim away any visible fat.
- Hard cheese such as Cheddar and Stilton contain more fat than medium fat cheese such as Edam, Brie and Camembert and lower fat cheeses such as cottage cheese, low fat cream cheese.
- Eat more boiled, jacket or mashed potato instead of chips and roast potatoes.
- Cut back on high fat snacks such as pastry, cakes, biscuits, pies, crisps and nuts.
- Use fat free dressings or small amounts of low fat varieties of mayonnaise and salad cream.
- 



## How to eat more fibre

Foods high in fibre tend to be more filling and are lower in fat. The soluble fibre found in fruit and vegetables, oats and pulses can help to lower cholesterol levels.

- Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables - have at least 5 servings every day. A serving is one of the following:
  - A slice of a large fruit e.g. melon., banana.*
  - 1 whole fruit e.g. a whole apple, banana.*
  - 2-3 smaller fruits e.g. plums.*
  - A handful of grapes or cherries (10-12).*
  - 1/3 of a large tin of fruit in natural juice.*
  - A small glass of fruit juice.*
  - 1 tablespoon of dried fruit.*
  - 3 tablespoons of vegetables or pulses.*
  - A small bowl of salad.*
- Try to eat more pulses e.g. kidney beans, butter beans, peas and lentils. Try the tinned or dried varieties added whole or mashed into soups, stews, mince, casseroles, chilli and salads.
- Include high fibre starchy foods at each meal. Choose from the following:
  - Granary, mixed grain, rye, wholemeal or high fibre white breads.*
  - Ryvita or wholewheat crackers.*
  - Porridge, oat based or high fibre breakfast cereals like Weetabix, Shredded Wheat, Fruit and Fibre or no added sugar muesli.*
  - Jacket potatoes or boiled potatoes in their skins*
  - Brown or wholemeal varieties of pasta or rice*
- When eating more fibre it is important to drink enough fluid. Try to drink at least 8-10 cups of low sugar fluids a day e.g. water, no added sugar squash, diet fizzy drinks, tea and coffee.

## Glycaemic Index

Some starchy carbohydrate foods are more slowly absorbed by the body and can help to improve blood sugar levels. They are said to have a "low glycaemic index".

Try to include a food with a low Glycaemic Index at two meals each day.

### **These foods have a low Glycaemic Index and are good choices.**

Granary, wholegrain, soft grain, rye, pitta and pumpnickel bread.

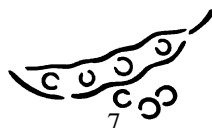
Porridge made from rolled oats. No added sugar Muesli, Oat Bran, All Bran and Special K.

Pasta and Noodles

Basmati and Couscous

Lentils, peas and beans, including baked beans.

Fruit such as apples, pears, plums, oranges, apricots, bananas and kiwi.



## Salt

Too much salt in your food may increase your blood pressure which can contribute to heart disease and stroke. Because of this it is recommended that everyone should not eat more than 6g salt per day.

- A pinch of salt can be used in cooking but do not add any at the table
- Alternative seasonings include: pepper, herbs (e.g. fresh or dried parsley, thyme, mint), spices (e.g. cumin coriander), lemon juice, malt and wine vinegars,



- Limit salty foods such as Oxo, Bovril, Marmite, sea salt, garlic salt, celery salt, crisps, salted peanuts and soy sauce.
- Limit processed foods e.g. tinned foods and ready meals.
- There are no benefits of using salt substitutes e.g. lo salt

## Alcohol

Alcohol should only be drunk in moderation as excessive amounts can increase your blood pressure and lead to weight gain. Sensible limits recommended for alcohol intakes are:

Women: no more than 2-3 units per day, with at least 2 days in the week alcohol free.

Men: no more than 3-4 units per day, with at least 2 days in the week alcohol free.

1 unit is: ½ pint of beer, lager or cider (3.5% alcohol content)  
125ml glass of wine (9% alcohol content)  
25ml measure of spirits (40% alcohol content)

## Food Labelling

Food labelling can help us to make healthier choices when we're shopping.

### What does the nutrition label tell me?

**ENERGY** kJ (kilojoules)/kcal (kilocalories)

This is the energy provided from food. People who are watching their weight may find it useful to look at the calorie value.

**CARBOHYDRATE**

This includes both sugars and starches. Natural sugar from any milk or fruit in the product is included under sugar as well as the added sugar. The amount of sugar in a food is not always an indication of the effect it will have on your blood sugar.

**FAT** There are 3 main types of fat: saturates, polyunsaturates and monounsaturates. Foods containing less than 3g of fat per 100g are low fat foods.

The lower sodium/salt content the better. 0.5g or more is a lot, 0.1g or less is a little.

NUTRITION INFORMATION		
Ingredients list: The ingredients on a product are listed in descending order by weight.		
TYPICAL VALUES (Cooked as per instructions)		
	per SERVING	per 100g
<b>ENERGY</b>	<b>1462 k J.</b> <b>351 k cal</b>	<b>975 k J.</b> <b>234 k cal</b>
<b>PROTEIN</b>	<b>9.0g</b>	<b>6.0g</b>
<b>CARBOHYDRATE</b>	<b>28.2g</b>	<b>18.8g</b>
of which sugars	3.0g	2.0g
of which starch	25.2g	16.8g
<b>FATS</b>	<b>23.3g</b>	<b>14.9g</b>
of which saturates	7.6g	5.1g
of which monounsaturates	10.9g	7.3g
of which polyunsaturates	2.7g	1.8g
<b>FIBRE</b>	<b>1.6g</b>	<b>1.1g</b>
<b>SALT</b>	<b>1.5g</b>	<b>1.0g</b>
<b>SODIUM</b>	<b>0.6g</b>	<b>0.4g</b>
<b>PER SERVING</b>	<b>351 CAL</b>	<b>23.3g FAT</b>