



# What Can I Eat?

Healthy Choices for American Indians  
and Alaska Natives with Type 2 Diabetes



## Class 4:

Fat, Salt, and Healthy Eating  
Away from Home

Participant Booklet





# Introduction

One of the first things people ask when they get diabetes is “What can I eat?” In this class, we will discuss how Native people with diabetes can eat better and be healthier.

## **We will:**

1. Show you tools that make it easy to choose healthy foods
2. Practice physical activities that can improve your blood glucose
3. Teach you about mindfulness, which can help you make better food choices
4. Set goals to help you stay on track

**We will be practicing these skills in class.**

# Class 4:

## Fat, Salt, and Healthy Eating Away from Home

In this session, we are going to:

- Learn how to eat less salt by reading food labels
- Identify healthy and unhealthy fats
- Learn tools for eating healthier at restaurants, on-the-go, and at special events
- Learn a new physical activity
- Try a mindful practice that can help us make healthy food choices
- Set a healthy lifestyle goal



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# Introduction to Fat, Salt, and Diabetes

Foods that have a lot of unhealthy fat and salt are bad for our hearts. People with diabetes need to be careful not to eat too much of these things, because heart problems are very common for people with diabetes.



# Healthy Eating with Salt

Salt makes food taste good and is an inexpensive way to flavor food. But most people eat too much salt every day, and that is bad for our hearts.

Most people with diabetes should eat less than 2,300 milligrams (mg) of salt each day. This is about 1 teaspoon of salt. The salt packets you find at many fast food restaurants have about 1 teaspoon of salt in them!



= 1 teaspoon

**If you eat 3 meals a day, it's best to eat 800 milligrams (mg) of salt or less per meal.** Talk with your health care provider about the amount of salt that is best for you.

Most of the salt we eat comes from processed foods. Processed foods are foods that are not in their natural form. An example is potato chips (processed) versus a whole potato (not processed).

Processed foods often have salt added to them to make them taste better or last longer. Examples of processed foods include: potato chips, Ramen noodles, hot dogs, Spam, some kinds of cheese like American, and fast food.

## Reading a Food Label for Salt

- On a food label, salt is called **sodium**. Salt and sodium mean the same thing.
- We can read food labels to find out how much salt is in the foods we eat.
- You can use the food label to understand how much salt you are eating in just 3 steps.

Nutrition Facts	
3 servings per container	
Serving size	1/3 of the box
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>310</b>
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 1.5g	2%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 960mg	42%
Total Carbohydrate 53g	19%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Total Sugars 2g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 5g	10%

Not a significant source of vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium

\*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.

### Step 1:

Look at the number of servings. This is how many servings are in the container.

### Step 2:

Look at the amount of sodium. This is how much salt is in **1 serving**.

### Step 3:

Decide if this food has too much salt. Is there more than the recommended 800 mg in a serving? Is there more

than 1 serving per container? If so, that means you will be eating more than the amount of salt listed on the label, if you eat more than 1 serving.

**Remember the recommendation is 800 mg of sodium or less per meal.**



# Tips to Eat Less Salt

Need to cut down on salt? Try these tasty swaps:

Ingredient:	Low-Salt Swap:
Salt in recipes	Fresh or dried herbs and spices, such as onion and garlic (powder), salt-free seasoning, pepper
Salt on vegetables	Fresh squeezed lemon or vinegar
Soy sauce	Reduced-sodium or light soy sauce
Broth	Reduced- or low-sodium broth
Canned vegetables	Low- or no-salt canned vegetables or frozen vegetables without sauce  Rinse canned vegetables to remove some salt
Processed protein food like Spam, bacon, hot dogs	Canned tuna, chicken or turkey slices, hard boiled egg, low-salt nuts

## You can also cut down on salt by:

- Eating fewer processed foods.
- Choosing more foods in their natural form. “Natural form” means how they would be found in nature.
- Not eating fast food.
- Drinking only water.
- Limiting the amount of cheese you eat. Cheese is high in salt. If you eat cheese, try to keep it to 1 serving. A serving of cheese is about the size of 4 stacked dice.
- Buy low-salt versions of canned and packaged foods.
- Add salt-free food to your packaged food. For example, add cooked rice to your Rice-A-Roni so the salt from the Rice-A-Roni gets spread out across more rice.



# Choosing Healthy Fats

Fat is found naturally in foods. We also add fat to foods for flavor and cooking.



**Some foods are naturally high in healthy fat.** These foods include avocado, seeds (like sunflower seeds), fish (like salmon), sea mammals (like seal), nuts (like peanuts, walnuts, acorns, and cashews), or nut butters (like peanut butter).



**Some foods are naturally high in unhealthy fat.** Foods that are high in unhealthy fat are red meats, chicken with skin on it, whole milk, processed snacks (like chips), cheese, and fast food.



**Many traditional protein foods, like wild game (bison, elk, deer), have less unhealthy fat** than protein foods like beef and pork. This makes traditional protein foods a more healthful choice.

We often add fat to our food for flavor or in cooking.

### **Healthy fats are liquid oils**

- Oils are healthy fats that we add to foods for flavor and cooking.
- Oils can be used to stir fry veggies, will keep meat from sticking to the pan or grill, and can be used as a salad dressing.
- Oils that are healthy fats are liquid at room temperature. That means if it is not in the refrigerator, it is liquid.
- Some healthy oils are listed in the table on the next page.
- If healthy oils like olive or canola oil are more expensive, try these cost-saving tips:
  - Buy oils when they are on sale
  - Buy oils in larger containers and share with another family
  - Decrease the amount of oil you use, so it lasts longer



### **Most Unhealthy fats are solid**

- Unhealthy fats that we add to foods for flavor and cooking include margarine, Crisco, lard, and butter.
- These should be limited
- Try to eat these foods only on special occasions.



## Class 4: Fat, Salt, and Healthy Eating Away from Home

The table below lists healthy and unhealthy fats by how often we should eat them.

- Often = Healthy fats can be added to your meal plan “often” (once a day).
- Sometimes = Fats listed under “sometimes” should only be eaten about once a week.
- Limit = Fats that are very unhealthy are listed under “limit” and should be eaten only on special occasions.

### Healthy and Unhealthy Fats

OFTEN (ONCE A DAY)	SOMETIMES (ONCE A WEEK)	LIMIT (SPECIAL OCCASIONS)
Oil-based salad dressing: vinaigrette, oil and vinegar	Low-fat cream-based salad dressing like light ranch	Full-fat cream-based salad dressing like ranch or blue cheese
Oils: canola, olive, sunflower, peanut	Oils: corn, soybean, safflower, sesame	Butter, lard, coconut oil
Fish oil, seal oil	Mayonnaise	Margarine
		Cream



# Healthy Eating Out or at Special Events

Eating out at restaurants, at special events and celebrations, and on-the-go is very common and can be a great way to spend time with family and community.

Often, when we eat outside of our homes, the foods we eat are high in fat and salt. These foods are not healthy for our hearts.

**One of the best ways to eat healthy meals outside of the home is to plan ahead.** For example, if you are going to a potluck, you can bring a healthy dish to share. If you are on the way to a sporting event, you can bring healthy snacks, such as fruit or nuts, with you.

When you're eating outside of your home, here are tips to eat healthfully:

## Follow the Diabetes Plate:

- Fill 1 small portion of the plate with carb food
- Fill most of your plate with veggies (not potatoes, peas, corn, squash)
- Choose protein foods that are prepared in a healthy way (grilled, baked, sautéed, steamed)



**Choose an unsweetened drink or water.**

**Choose foods that are cooked in healthier ways.** The following table shows the healthiest and unhealthiest ways to cook food. Try to choose foods that are prepared in the ways listed under the word “Best.” For example, if you order fish at a restaurant, you can have it baked instead of fried.

You can cook foods using the **best** cooking methods every day. You can cook foods using the **better** cooking methods a couple of times a week. You should limit cooking foods the **worst** cooking method to only special occasions.



**BEST**

Bake  
Broil  
Grill  
Microwave  
Roast  
Steam



**BETTER**

Light sauté  
Light stir-fry  
(using a little bit  
of vegetable oil)



**WORST**

Deep-fried

## Physical Activity

To help manage your blood glucose, it is best to do 30 minutes of physical activity every day.

### What counts as physical activity?

Anything that gets your body moving counts! You could

take a walk, dance, work in the garden, do chores around the house and yard, or play outside with your kids or grandkids. Try to do things that get you breathing a little faster than normal or that make your heart rate go up a little bit. You should be able to talk while you exercise but not sing.

## **How can I get 30 minutes of physical activity every day?**

There are some easy ways to be more active every day.

- Stretch at least once a day.
- Use your own body weight for strength activities.
- Get creative with your movement—set an alarm on your phone to get up once every hour and do something active like walk up the steps, dance, or do 5 jumping jacks.
- Be creative so your body moves differently each time you get up.

You don't have to do 30 minutes of activity all at once. You can be active for even 5 minutes at a time, 6 times a day.



# Mindful Nutrition Choice Activity

Sometimes, we make unhealthy food choices without meaning to. This can happen when we make choices and do things on “autopilot.” Being on autopilot just means we are doing something without thinking about it.

Have you ever realized you were driving the wrong way because you are always used to turning left, but today you needed to turn right? That is autopilot! Sometimes we get on autopilot when we are making food choices.

Being more mindful can help you turn off autopilot and make healthier food choices.

Being mindful means paying attention to what you are doing right now. When you are being mindful, you are paying attention to:

- What is happening right now
- How your body is feeling right now

One way to practice mindfulness is to find something you often do on autopilot. Practice doing it while focusing and paying attention to what you are doing. Mindful walking is one example of an activity you can try.

Usually when we walk, we aren't paying attention to each foot stepping down, to each leg lifting up 1 at a time. We usually walk on autopilot. When you are mindful walking, you can pay special attention to each foot lifting off the ground, each leg muscle working to lift that leg. Walk slowly in a circle. Every time your mind wanders to something else, bring your attention back to the details of walking.



You can try this activity with anything you usually do on autopilot, like making your morning coffee, feeding your dog, or brushing your teeth.

You can also try this activity when you make food choices. Slow down and instead of eating without thinking about it, consider each “step” of the meal. Examples could be:

1. How much food am I serving myself?
2. How would it feel to set my fork down in between bites to slow down?
3. What would happen if I turned off the television and focused only on my meal?
4. How does each bite feel and taste in my mouth?



# Summary

## To be healthy, you can:

1. Read the food label for salt. Remember to eat less than 800 mg of salt per meal.
2. Choose healthy fats, such as oils, to flavor and cook your food.
3. Limit adding unhealthy fats, like margarine, lard, Crisco, and butter, to your food and in cooking.
4. Choose protein foods that are cooked in a healthy way such as grilling, baking, or broiling.
5. Try to eat at least one traditional food each week.
6. Limit fast and processed food to eat less fat and salt.

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7. When you eat outside of your home, here are tips to eat a healthy meal:

- **Follow the Diabetes Plat Method:**

- Fill 1 small portion with carb food
- Fill most of your plate with veggies (not potatoes, peas, corn, or squash)
- Choose protein foods that are prepared in a healthy way (grilled, baked, sautéed, steamed)

- **Choose a unsweetened drink or water**

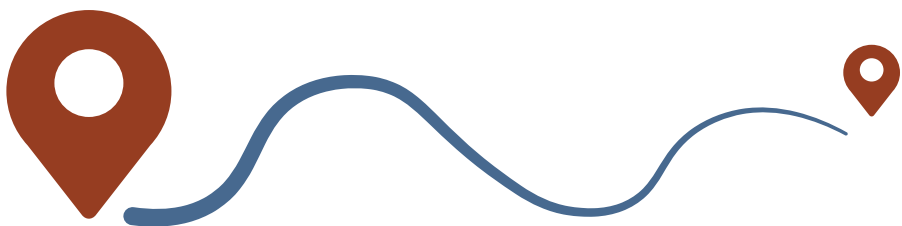
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8. Be physically active for 30 minutes a day. You can break your activity up into 5-10 minute periods several times a day as long as it adds up to 30 minutes.

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9. Practice being mindful during times when you are usually on autopilot. Like when you are walking, eating, or preparing food.





# Goal Planner

To be successful in changing behaviors and learning new skills, it is helpful to make goals. Planning out the details of your goal can help you to achieve it.

1. Choose a goal listed below, or make a goal of your own.
2. Prepare for your goal.

## Choose A Goal

Please choose a goal and fill in the blanks. Or, you can write a different goal related to class that isn't listed.

**Choose 1 change you can make for the next class, which is in 2 months.**

- Read food labels to look for sodium (salt) the next time I buy food at the store.**

I can start on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday (Circle all that apply)

The foods that I will check food labels for are:

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## Teach a family member or friend how to choose food that is lower in salt.

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A person I would like to teach is:

\_\_\_\_\_.

I can teach them on \_\_\_\_\_ (day).

I will teach them: (check all that you want to try)

Low-salt food tips from page 9

How to read a food label to find low-salt foods

## Be more physically active.

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I will be physically active on Monday Tuesday  
Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday  
(Circle all that apply)

I will be physically active for \_\_\_\_\_ minutes each time.

A good time of day for me to be active is:

\_\_\_\_\_.

The activity I would like to try first is:

\_\_\_\_\_.



**Use the mindfulness technique when I am doing something that I often do on autopilot.**

The thing that I do on autopilot is:

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**Other:**

This is a goal to help with:

- Food Choices       Drink Choices  
 Being Active       Being Mindful  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Goal details: \_\_\_\_\_

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What days of the week will I do this goal?

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**Choose healthy fats instead of unhealthy fats, when adding fat to a meal.**

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A food or meal that I often add fat to is:

\_\_\_\_\_.

The fat that I usually use is:\_\_\_\_\_.

A healthier fat I can use instead is:\_\_\_\_\_.

**Choose healthy food when I eat outside of the home.**

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In the next 2 months, I have plans to eat outside of the home here:

\_\_\_\_\_.

One thing I can try to do to eat healthier at this place is:

\_\_\_\_\_.

**I will help my community eat less fat or salt.**

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I can do this by bringing healthy food to:

\_\_\_\_\_. (Name of event)

I will bring this healthy food to share:

\_\_\_\_\_.



**Eat low salt or low fat foods with someone in my family.**

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The person I would like to eat low salt or low fat foods with is: \_\_\_\_\_.

The low salt and low fat meal we will eat together is:

Breakfast      Lunch      Dinner      Snack

## Prepare for Your Goal

What do you need to do to get ready for your goal? For example, will you need to go to the grocery store? Will you need to have a family meeting?

The steps I need to take to prepare for my goal are:

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**Tell someone about your goal.**

I will tell \_\_\_\_\_ about my goal.



**For the next 2 months, until our next class, please:**

- 1. Work on your **goal**.
- 2. **Bring something to our next class to share during our group share.** This could include:
  - A food package or label of a low fat or low salt food you tried.
  - A picture of a meal that you made where you used the Diabetes Plate Method.
  - A recipe or picture of a healthy meal you ate at a restaurant or celebration/ gathering.
  - Anything else that you'd like to share with the group related to diabetes and nutrition.

Our next class is on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Day of week and date) (time)

# Stretching Exercises

Do these stretches gently and slowly. Do not bounce.

## Deep breathing

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- Take a deep breath in and raise your arms over your head.
- Breathe out and lower your arms to your side.
- Do this 2 times.



## Neck stretching

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- Tilt your neck to the side, so your ear is close to your shoulder.
- Then tilt your head to the other side.
- Do this 2 times.



## Shoulder stretches

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- Lift your shoulder up toward your ear.
- Lower your shoulder back down.
- Do this 5 times on each side.



## Side stretches

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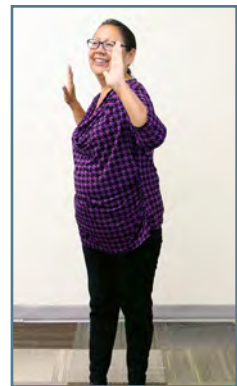
- Reach both arms up in the air above your head.
- Slowly, reach your right arm over your head toward the left side of your body.
- Feel the stretch along the right side of your body.
- Straighten up so that you are standing straight up with your arms in the air.
- Slowly, reach your left arm over your head toward the the right side of your body.
- Repeat 5 times in each direction.



## Twists

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- Plant your feet on the floor about hip distance apart.
- Hold your arms straight out in front of you.
- From your waist, twist to the right side.
- Keep your hips pointing forward.
- The twist should come from your waist, not your hips, feeling the stretch in your waist.
- Gently move back to center.
- From your waist, twist to the left side.
- Twist side to side 3 times in each direction.



## Back and leg stretches

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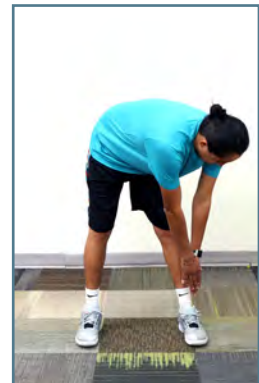
- Stand with your feet about foot apart.
- Reach your arms out in front of you.
- Bend forward from your waist, with your back flat.
- Your butt should be sticking far back behind you.
- Bend as far as you can until you feel a stretch in the back of your legs.
- When you feel the stretch, hold there for a count of 5.
- Slowly stand back up.
- Do this 3 times.
- Be careful not to bounce.



## Leg stretch #1

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- Stand with your feet a little more than hip width apart.
- With a flat back, slowly stretch down toward your right ankle.
- Slide both hands down your right leg, until you feel a stretch on the left side of your body.
- Hold for a count of 3.
- Carefully slide back up to standing



and switch to your left leg.

- Repeat 3 times on each side.
- Be careful not to bounce.

## Leg stretch #2

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- Stand facing a wall.
- Place your hands flat against the wall.
- Lean against the wall at an angle.
- Slowly move your heels towards the ground if they are not already on the ground.
- Feel the stretch in the back of your calves and ankles.
- Hold this stretch for a slow count of 10.



# Body Weight Exercises

## Chair squat

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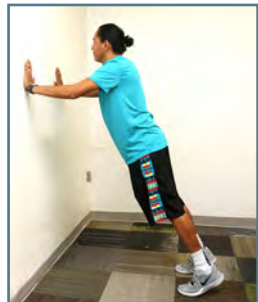
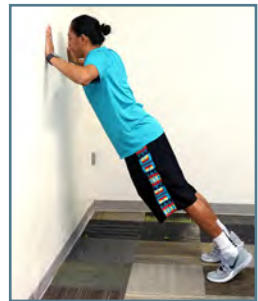
- Stand tall with your back to a chair. Place your feet shoulder width apart.
- Hold your arms out in front of you.
- Pushing your hips back and bending your knees, sit down on the chair.
- Pause for 2 seconds. Then, pressing down on your heels, stand up.
- Do this 10 times.



## Wall push up

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- Stand facing a wall.
- Place your hands on the wall, about shoulder width apart.
- Slide your feet back until your body is at an angle.
- Bend your arms to lower your body toward the wall.
- Straighten your arms to push yourself back away from the wall.
- Your body should be straight the entire time.
- Only your elbows should bend.
- Do this 10 times.



## Bicep curl (front of upper arm)

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- With your arms straight down in front of you and your palms up, bend your elbows to lift your forearms.
- Your elbows should stay in the same place.
- Do this 15 times.



## Triceps extension (back of upper arm)

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- Place both arms straight over your head and clasp your hands together.
- By bending your elbows, bring your hands back behind your head.
- Extend your arms back up above your head.
- Do this 15 times.



## Shoulder press

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- Start with your arms straight out to the sides, at shoulder height.
- Ball your hands into fists.
- One at a time, slowly raise 1 fist into the air until your arm is straight above you.
- Bending the elbow, bring your fist back to shoulder height.
- Repeat these steps with your other arm.
- Do this exercise 20 times, 10 times on each side.





**What Can I Eat?<sup>®</sup>**

## **Centers for American Indian & Alaska Native Health**

colorado school of public health

**Healthy Choices for American Indians and Alaska Natives with Type 2 Diabetes**

**What Can I Eat?<sup>®</sup> is an initiative of the American Diabetes Association<sup>®</sup>**

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