



Module 25: More About Carbs

Lifestyle Coach Guide



Module Overview

Learning more about carbohydrates (carbs) can help people make informed decisions about what to eat to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. This module gives participants a deeper understanding of carbs.

Participant Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Describe the link between carbs and type 2 diabetes
- Identify the different types of carbs
- Describe a healthy approach to carbs

Things to Do

In addition to the Session Checklist, you will also want to do the following:

Before this session:

- Communicate with your participants via email, text message, app, or social media to prepare and motivate them for this upcoming session that highlights the role of carbs. Here are some sample messages you can send out to participants for this module:
 - 1 Week Prior: “Have you heard that you can’t eat carbs with prediabetes? In our upcoming session on carbs, find out how carbs give your body energy, vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Don’t miss this informative session!”
 - 1 to 2 Days Prior: “Get that food log ready! Our next session, More about Carbs, is coming up. We’re going to be looking at your favorite carbs, seeing how often you eat them, and figuring out if you need a healthy swap or not!”

After this session:

- Communicate with your participants via email, text message, app, or social media to continue the conversation about carbs. Here are some examples of messages to post:
 - “Since our session on carbs, share any menu ideas that you’ve tried that include a healthy approach to carbs.”

Session Content

The following content is designed to last for 60 minutes. Please allow about 10 extra minutes to receive weigh-in information and to consult with participants privately, if needed, at the start of each session.

Welcome and Review	Page 3	5 Min
Session Focus	Page 4	1 Min
Carbs and Type 2 Diabetes	Page 5	5 Min
Types of Carbs	Page 8	14 Min
A Healthy Approach to Carbs	Page 12	10 Min
Dakota’s Story	Page 15	10 Min
My Carbs	Page 17	5 Min
Plan for Success	Page 18	5 Min
Summary and Closing	Page 19	5 Min

Welcome and Review



Time Estimate: 5 minutes
Method: Facilitated Discussion

SAY:

Welcome back, everyone! This is the [current session number] meeting of [name of program].

Today, we are going to learn more about carbohydrates, also known as carbs.

Before we start, let's spend a few minutes reviewing what we discussed last time. I will try to answer any questions you may have.

DO:

Briefly summarize the previous session.

DISCUSS:

What questions do you have for me about what we talked about last time?

SAY:

Let's talk about how things went with the action plan you made last time.

DISCUSS:

What went well? What didn't go well?

SAY:

Now let's talk about how it went with the other things you tried at home.

DISCUSS:

What went well? What didn't go well?



Time Estimate: 1 minute
Method: Presentation

SAY:

Please look at “Session Focus” on page 1 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display “Session Focus” from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

SAY:

Understanding carbs can help you make healthier food choices to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. Today, we will talk about:

- The link between carbs and type 2 diabetes
- Different types of carbs
- A healthy approach to carbs

Finally, you will make a new action plan.



Time Estimate: 5 minutes
Methods: Presentation, Facilitated Discussion

This part of the session explains the link between carbohydrates and type 2 diabetes.

DISCUSS:

What do you already know about carbs?

DO:

Encourage participants to share what they already know about carbs.

Use this discussion to gauge the group's understanding of the link between carbs and type 2 diabetes. Correct any misconceptions, such as all carbs are bad or that they don't contain fiber. Focus on gaps in knowledge during the rest of the discussion.

SAY:

Let's talk about the link between carbs and type 2 diabetes. Your body breaks down or converts most carbs into glucose.

ASK:

What is glucose?

ANSWER:

It's a type of sugar in your blood that is the main energy source for the body. The carbs we eat, including other sugars, like fructose (fruit sugar), sucrose (cane sugar), and lactose (milk sugar), are broken down into glucose to fuel your body.

SAY:

So, when you eat more carbs, your body makes more glucose, which increases your blood sugar. This sugar leaves the blood and goes into their cells. This sugar gives their cells energy.

ASK:

What hormone in the body helps sugar leave the blood and enter the cells?

ANSWER:

Insulin.

SAY:

In people with type 2 diabetes, the body doesn't use insulin well. So, sugar builds up in their blood instead of going into their cells. That means the cells don't get enough energy. And as you know, high blood sugar can cause many health problems over time.

Please look at "Carbs and Type 2 Diabetes" on page 2 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display "Carbs and Type 2 Diabetes" from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

SAY:

Carbs provide your body with energy. A variety of foods contain carbs. However, all carbs are NOT created equal. The difference is in the fiber and nutrient content. Look at the examples. An apple contains carbs, but it also contains vitamins, minerals, and fiber. On the other hand, jellybeans also contain carbs. But they have no vitamins, no minerals, and no fiber. What they do have is a lot of added sugar!

ASK:

Recall what you've learned about processed foods. What happens to a food when it's processed?

ANSWER:

Processed foods are often stripped of their nutrients (that is, their vitamins, minerals, and fiber).

SAY:

Carbohydrates from heavily processed foods can be converted to sugar more quickly in the body than carbohydrates from whole foods. Look at the example of the sweet potato. A baked sweet potato or sweet potato puree is different than sweet potato casserole with marshmallows or sweet potato chips.

This doesn't mean you can't enjoy your favorite carbohydrate foods and beverages from time to time, like jellybeans! You just need to think about how often you eat those foods, how much you eat, and whether you want to make a swap or change to support your healthy eating goals. That's what we'll be focusing on in this session.



Time Estimate: 14 minutes
Methods: Presentation, Facilitated Discussion

In this part of the session, participants will gain an understanding of the three main types of carbs and the various foods that fit into these categories.

SAY:

We've discussed the link between carbs and type 2 diabetes. Now let's talk about the various types of carbs. Please look at "Types of Carbs" on page 3 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display "Types of Carbs" from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

SAY:

The three main types of carbs are starches, sugars, and fiber. Let's walk through each of these types.

Starches (5 minutes)

DISCUSS:

What are some examples of starchy food?

DO:

Share the following (if not mentioned by participants):

- Corn
- Potatoes
- Kidney beans
- Lentils
- Bread
- Pasta

SAY:

Starches include three types of food: starchy veggies; beans, peas, and lentils; and grain foods.

ASK:

Here is a list of starchy veggies. What is the difference between starchy versus non-starchy veggies?

ANSWER:

The key distinction is that starchy vegetables have more carbs.

DO:

Guide participants through beans, peas, and lentils, and then grain foods.

ASK:

Why are whole grains more nutritious than refined grains?

ANSWER:

Whole grains provide fiber, as well as essential vitamins, unlike refined grain foods. Refined grains are stripped of valuable nutrients in the refining process.

Sugars (4 minutes)

DO:

Guide participants through the section on sugars, emphasizing that there are many foods and beverages that we consume that also contain a lot of added sugar.

SAY:

Foods in this category, like jellybeans, are often termed “empty calories” because they contain high calories without additional nutritional value such as vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Think about highly processed foods like sugar, syrup, lemonade, soda, salty snacks, and sweets. They give you short-term energy but don’t have many other nutritional benefits!

ASK:

What other food or beverages can you think of that contain “empty calories”?

ANSWER:

Possible answers from participants may include:

- Soda
- Pastries
- Pies
- Pancake syrup
- Packaged frozen snacks (pizza rolls, hot pockets)
- Sugary coffee drinks

Fiber (5 minutes)

DO:

Guide participants through the section on fiber. Emphasize how fiber is removed through food processing when producing refined flours, such as white flour used in making bread and pastries.

ASK:

What are other kinds of food that contain fiber?

ANSWER:

Possible answers from participants may include:

- Apples and pears (with peel)
- Broccoli
- Strawberries
- Lentils
- Kidney beans
- Chickpeas
- Oats
- Sweet potatoes
- Swiss chard
- Artichokes
- 100% whole-grain breads (seven grain, dark rye)

NOTE:

If a participant asks about dietary fiber supplements, explain that a fiber supplement can help reduce risks.



Time Estimate: 10 minutes
Methods: Presentation, Facilitated Discussion

In this part of the session, participants learn how to take a healthy approach to carbs in their everyday lives.

SAY:

We've discussed the various types of carbs. Now, we'll talk about how to take a healthy approach to carbs so you can make the changes that you need.

Please look at "A Healthy Approach to Carbs" on page 10 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display "A Healthy Approach to Carbs" from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

DO:

Discuss nutrient-dense foods.

ASK:

What are some nutrient-dense carbohydrate foods you can think of?

DO:

Tell participants to add their ideas in the space provided in the Participant Guide.

ANSWER:

Possible answers from participants may include whole grains, fruits, vegetables, beans, peas, lentils, non-fat or low-fat milk or yogurt, etc.:

- Quinoa
- Buckwheat
- Sweet potatoes
- Bananas
- Oranges
- Blueberries
- Kidney beans

DO:

Review the key points listed in the “Make Your Plate” and “Choose Carbs Wisely” sections on page 11 in the Participant Guide.

SAY:

Now, look at the list of ideas presented that you could try.

DISCUSS:

What other ideas do you have that you can add to this list?

DO:

Give participants a few minutes to brainstorm some ideas. Then, discuss their ideas as a group.

SAY:

Finally, there are some examples of healthy carbs meals in your Participant Guide on page 13.

ASK:

What healthy carb choices are presented in these meals?

ANSWER:

Possible answers from participants may include:

- Whole-grain oatmeal
- Blueberries
- Almonds
- Whole-grain toast
- Bananas
- Whole-grain and whole-wheat pasta
- Brown rice
- Whole-grain tortillas
- Black beans



Time Estimate: 10 minutes
Methods: Presentation, Facilitated
Discussion

Participants will apply the information they have learned about carbs and use “Dakota’s Story” to brainstorm ways he can limit, change, and swap his food choices.

SAY:

We’ve discussed how to take a healthy approach to carbs, so now let’s put into practice some of the things you have learned about carbs in today’s session.

Please look at “Dakota’s Story—Part 1” on page 15 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display “Dakota’s Story—Part 1” from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

DO:

Read (or ask a volunteer to read) the story.

Then, read the directions that follow the story.

DISCUSS:

Let’s brainstorm ways we can help Dakota choose carbs wisely and make some healthy swaps. What ideas do you have?

DO:

Share additional ideas with participants, if needed.

- Breakfast: Limit jam, orange juice, and pastries; swap low-fiber high-sugar cereals for oatmeal; measure sugar and syrup; eat yogurt with no added sugar.
- Lunches: Ask for mixed brown and white rice in burritos; try frozen cauliflower rice in a stir-fry; try a half-portion with extra veggies; swap drinks for low- or no-calorie options; use vegetable wraps, skinny bread, or whole-grain bread instead of white bread.
- Dinners: Try less processed corn or potato options like baked sweet potatoes or corn on the cob; experiment with other grains for pastas; limit beer or wine; enjoy fruit (in moderation) instead of cake or other highly processed desserts; use the plate method to make sure there are enough vegetables and protein.
- Snacks: Limit snacks whenever possible; choose simple snacks like fruit, nuts, and other nourishing foods.

SAY:

Please look at “Dakota’s Story—Part 2” on page 17 in the Participant Guide.

DO:

Read (or ask a volunteer to read) the conclusion of “Dakota’s Story—Part 2.”

SAY:

Remember, you can make healthier carb choices in small steps. Start small with one big change. In time, this change will become a habit, and then you can make additional changes from there.



Time Estimate: 5 minutes
Method: Presentation

Participants will apply the information they have learned about carbs to their own lifestyles. They will identify where healthy changes related to carbs are needed and what changes they will make.

SAY:

By now you may be thinking about ways you need to make healthy changes to the carbs you eat. Is it the kinds of carbs you're eating? Is it how many you're eating? Let's take a moment to put it down on paper.

Please look at "My Carbs" on page 18 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display "My Carbs" from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

DO:

Review the directions and examples in the Participant Guide with participants. If time allows, give participants a few minutes to begin working on this. Or, encourage participants to work on this between now and the next session so they can identify what changes they might need to make.



Time Estimate: 5 minutes

SAY:

Please look at your Action Plan Journal. Let's spend the next few minutes making a new action plan.

Keep in mind what worked and what didn't work well for you since our last session. Are there any changes that you want to make to your new routines? Are you ready for a new routine?

Also, keep in mind what we discussed today about carbs.

As you try out and practice your new routine, make sure to add in the following to make it automatic:

- Make your new routine easy and the old one harder to follow.
- Build in a healthy reward.
- Create times to repeat and practice your new routines.

If you are ready to add another routine, complete these 3 steps:

1. Identify what current routine needs to change or stop.
2. Plan a new routine that helps you make a positive change that will stick.
3. List cues or hints for when to use your new routine.

DO:

Give participants a few minutes to make their action plans.



Summary and Closing

Participant Guide
N/A



Time Estimate: 5 minutes

DO:

Review the tips and ideas presented in today's session. Answer questions as needed.

SAY:

We have come to the end of our meeting. Today, we learned more about carbs. We discussed:

- The link between carbs and type 2 diabetes
- Different types of carbs
- A healthy approach to carbs

DISCUSS:

Do you have questions about anything we talked about today?



Summary and Closing

Participant Guide
N/A

DO:

Answer questions as needed.

SAY:

Next time, we'll talk about the things you tried at home, including your action plan. We'll also talk about [include specific topics that will be presented in the next session].

Thank you for coming to this session. Remember to bring your Participant Guide and Action Plan Journal to the next session.

End of meeting.