



# What About Diabetes?

Nearly one-third of Canadian adults are living with diabetes, a serious disease that can lead to life-threatening complications. However, there has been significant research into lifestyle factors and dietary patterns to help manage diabetes.

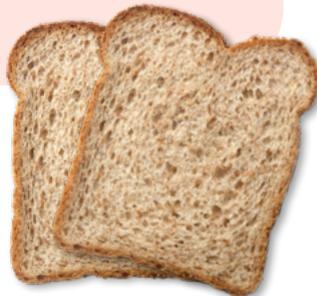


Let's learn how whole grains like wheat can play an important part in managing and reducing your risk of type 2 diabetes.

## HOW DIETARY FIBRE AFFECTS DIABETES

Research shows a link between dietary fibre consumption and the reduced risk of type 2 diabetes.<sup>1</sup> This is thought to be due to:

- Dietary fibre slowing digestion, which results in constant and slower release of glucose into your blood.
- High-fibre foods generally contribute to a nutrient dense diet as they are lower in calories but high in nutritional value.
- Dietary fibre's ability to help control the body's insulin response and help regulate blood glucose levels after a meal.
- Whole grain foods and foods high in dietary fibre promote satiety — or fullness — and can decrease your appetite.



<sup>1</sup> <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22649266/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.diabetes.ca/advocacy—policies/advocacy-reports/national-and-provincial-backgrounders/diabetes-in-canada>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22649266>

## WHAT IS DIABETES?

Diabetes affects people of all ages. It is a chronic condition in which the body does not produce insulin, or the body cannot properly use the insulin it produces.

- Insulin is a hormone produced by your pancreas and is necessary to regulate the amount of sugar (or glucose) in your blood.
- Too much glucose in your blood can cause damage to organs, blood vessels and nerves.

In 2022, **30%** of Canadians (about 11.7 million people) were **living with prediabetes** or diabetes.

Since diabetes is a condition where your body cannot properly manage the glucose in your blood, and glucose comes from the foods we eat, it makes sense that dietary patterns can support or hinder the management of diabetes. A healthy diet rich in dietary fibre and an active lifestyle are known to support a healthy body weight and the management of diabetes.

## QUICK TIP



Studies show that consuming **3 to 5 servings (48 to 80 g)** of whole grains per day reduces the risk of developing type 2 diabetes by **26%**.<sup>3</sup>



**Whole grain or whole wheat foods** are great sources of dietary fibre. Studies show that increased intake of whole grains, including wheat, can help manage and may reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes.<sup>3</sup>

In general, wheat-based foods that are higher in whole grains and dietary fibre have a lower glycemic index, but pasta is a unique example of a refined wheat food that has a low glycemic index.

## GLYCEMIC INDEX

The glycemic index (GI) is a scale from 1 to 100 that ranks a carbohydrate food or drink based on how much it raises your blood sugar levels after consumption.

### DID YOU KNOW?

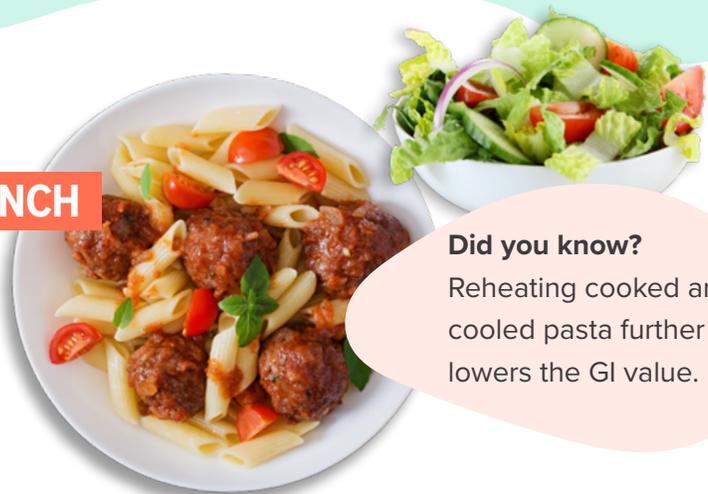
#### Pasta made from wheat is a low glycemic index food

You may think pasta causes a “sugar spike” after eating since it is a carbohydrate-rich food. But in fact, the gluten in durum wheat pasta creates a compact structure which makes the pasta harder for our digestive system to break down. The longer and harder our body has to work to breakdown the carbohydrates into sugar, the longer it will take for these sugars to be released and absorbed into our bloodstream.

## LOW GI MEALS

Here are a few low GI meal ideas to try.

### LUNCH



#### Did you know?

Reheating cooked and cooled pasta further lowers the GI value.

- leftover pasta, meatballs and side salad

### BREAKFAST



- yogurt parfait with fresh berries and 1/3 cup wheat bran cereal

### DINNER



**Did you know?** The fermentation process of making sourdough lowers the overall starch and sugar content of the bread, classifying it a **low GI food**.

- chili with a slice of sourdough bread