

Frequently Asked Questions about Beyond the Basics: Meal Planning For Healthy Eating, Diabetes Prevention & Management

Q1. Why is the cost of the *Beyond the Basics* Resource more than the *Good Health Eating Guide (GHEG)*?

A. The *Good Health Eating Guide* has not been available for several years. The new ***Beyond the Basics Resource*** is 1½ times larger than the GHEG. As well, the new Resource contains a lot more information and is more up to date than the GHEG. The higher cost also represents increased expenses incurred by CDA in the publication of this manual, such as paper, printing and layout.

The development of *Beyond the Basics* required extensive collaboration of health care professionals across the country. All the content published in this manual has been reviewed by experts in the field for accuracy and reflects current science and the Canadian Diabetes Association's clinical practice guidelines.

Q2. Why have some of the portion sizes in the *Beyond the Basics* Resource increased from the GHEG?

A. Portion sizes for all food groups containing carbohydrates have been re-evaluated to provide approximately 15 g of available carbohydrate. Where possible, portions are more similar to those in *Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating* and to the Quebec and US meal planning systems.

Since available carbohydrate does not include fibre and half the value of sugar alcohols, the portion size for some food choices has increased in order to provide 15 grams of available carbohydrate. For example, the GHEG stated 1 Milk choice (1/2 cup/125 mL) to be equivalent to 6 grams of carbohydrate and 4 grams of protein. Since the nutrient content of each food has been revised to provide 15 grams of available carbohydrate, the serving size of milk has increased to 1 cup/250 mL in *Beyond the Basics*.

Q3. Why has the amount of protein increased from 2 to 3 grams for the foods in the Grains & Starches section?

A. As technology and science have developed, so has the advancement of nutritional analysis. Current nutritional databases are more accurate and provide a more information about fibre than was previously known. The nutrient content for *Beyond the*

Basics Meal Planning Guide was obtained from the Canadian Nutrient File, 2005 and the USDA 2004 Nutrient File (Release 17).

The protein value for Grains & Starches increased due to the average reported protein content of 3 grams for the size of the food choices listed in this section. Some increases to portion sizes were made in order to provide 15 grams of available carbohydrate and this may also have contributed to an increase in protein content.

Q4. Why are most vegetables classified as “Free”, even though they contain some carbohydrate?

A. Since vegetables are rich in nutrients and associated with significant health benefits, the recommendation to have this food group listed as “free” was made to encourage vegetable consumption. In addition, nutrient data reveals that most vegetables are quite low in available carbohydrate, are high in fibre, and have a low glycemic index. Thus consuming food from this food group will have a small effect on blood glucose.

There are some vegetables that contain a little more available carbohydrate and the Registered Dietitian can teach clients to account for these particular foods. The *Beyond the Basics Resource* highlights vegetables, such as parsnips and peas that can be counted as one carbohydrate choice for a portion size of 1 cup (250 mL), if these are a favourite and routinely eaten food.

Q5. How should I be accounting for one carbohydrate choice?

A. In the *Beyond the Basics Meal Planning Guide* total carbohydrate minus dietary fibre is equal to Available Carbohydrate. All carbohydrate counting or references to carbohydrate assumes that available carbohydrate has been calculated. A portion of food with 12-20 grams of available carbohydrate is usually considered as 1 carbohydrate choice. Foods that contain 6-11 grams of available carbohydrate can be counted as a ½ choice.

It is the goal of the *Beyond the Basics Meal Planning Guide* to make it easier for consumers to understand and educators to teach how to include a variety of foods at mealtimes while keeping carbohydrate fairly consistent, for this reason, whole choices are recommended when doing a nutritional analysis. However, there may be times when more precise measures are required. For those times, there is a suggested classification of half choices listed on the Canadian Diabetes Association website.

Q6. What is the serving size that is equivalent to one Meat & Alternative choice?

A. One Meat & Alternative choice is equivalent to a 1 oz /30 grams cooked weight serving size. Educators may find it useful to recommend thinking of the Meat & Alternatives in terms of:

- 1-2 oz (30-60g) for the smaller meals or snacks.
- 3-4 oz (90-20g) for main meal for the smaller appetites.
- 5-6 oz (150-180g) for main meal for the bigger appetites.

When recommending Meat & Alternative choices, the handy portion guide or plate method may provide a simpler approach.

Q7: How should I teach clients to determine what one choice is?

A:

1 Carbohydrate Choice (12 to 20 g available carbohydrate)

½ Carbohydrate Choice (6 to 11 g available carbohydrate)

[so 1½ Carbohydrate Choices would be 21 to 26 g available carbohydrate]

1 Meat & Alternative Choice (6 to 8 g protein, 5 g fat)

½ Meat & Alternative Choice (3 to 5 g protein, 2 g fat)

1 Fats Choice (4 to 6 g fat)

½ Fats Choice (2 to 3 g fat)

Q8. Why are my recipe calculations different from the amount in the *Beyond the Basics* Resource?

A. Remember that one Meat & Alternative choice is equivalent to 7 grams of protein and 3-5 grams of fat. Therefore when the recipe calls for lean meat, poultry or fish, any added fat (i.e. butter, oil, mayonnaise) may already be included as the 3-5 grams of fat allocated in one Meat & Alternatives choice.

Sample calculation from Pg 86 in *Beyond the Basics* Resource

Beef Burger Krispies (Makes 6-8 medium meatloaves)

Ingredients:

340g lean ground beef

½ cup dry oatmeal

¼ tsp pepper

2 Tbsp chopped onion

3 Tbsp artificial sweetener

¼ cup ketchup

½ cup dry mustard

Nutrients per meatloaf

Calories 125

Carbohydrate 5g

Fibre 1g

Protein 13g

Fat 5g

Sodium 120mg

Available carbohydrate: 4 g

Choices per meatloaf: 2 Meat & Alternatives

The 5 grams of fat stated in the nutrients per meatloaf is accounted for in the Meat & Alternatives choice, therefore adding a fat choice will overestimate both fat and caloric intake (2 Meat & Alternatives + 1 Fat = 10 grams of fat).

Since the available carbohydrate content in the meatloaf is less than 5 grams, most individuals may not have to count it as a part of their recommended intake. For individuals using a tight carbohydrate to insulin ratio (such as in intensive therapy) these more precise values may be required.

Q9. Where would a new diabetes educator find more information about the *Beyond the Basics Meal Planning Guide*?

A. All the nutrition-related resources and tools produced by Canadian Diabetes Association have supplementary material for educators available on the website at www.diabetes.ca. There is supplementary material for this meal planning guide called: ***Helpful Hints For Educators Using Beyond the Basics: Meal Planning for Healthy Eating, Diabetes Prevention and Management***. In addition, powerpoint presentations on how to use *Beyond the Basics* are available on the website at http://www.diabetes.ca/Section_Professionals/ng_updates.asp.

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