

Diabetes Discourse

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Quarterly Newsletter of the Bovell Cancer Diabetes Foundation (BCDF)

This Free Newsletter is a Vital Resource for Diabetes Prevention and for anyone Living with Diabetes

Our Vision

- Enriching lives, one person at a time

Our Mission

- To enrich the lives of people living with or at risk for cancer and diabetes by providing financial resources, support, preventive and management education.

BCDF Activities Include:

- Modest grants to individuals/families affected by cancer or diabetes to enhance their quality of life
- Prevention and management education, and small-group workshops
- Advocacy and referrals to resources for individuals/families affected by cancer or diabetes
- Writing grant proposals and fundraising

BCDF relies on donations to carry out its mission. We are an incorporated, charitable Foundation in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. BCDF functions with volunteers only and no paid staff. To contact us with comments, questions or articles, phone 868) 667-2576; WhatsApp 334.590.3073 or e-mail:

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<http://www.bovellcancerdiabetesfoundation.org>

Disclaimer: This newsletter is meant to educate and inform. It is not to be used as medical advice. Please consult your doctor for medical advice.

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FOOD & NUTRITION BASICS

Be Salt Smart

Healthy eating is important at every age. Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. When deciding what to eat or drink, choose options that are full of nutrients and limited in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. Start with these tips:

Read the label

The Nutrition Facts label shows you how much sodium is in packaged foods.

- ✓ Choose lower sodium foods —especially if you have high blood pressure, diabetes, or kidney disease.
- ✓ Eat fruits and vegetables - enjoy a variety of fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables—almost all of them are naturally low in sodium. Look for canned vegetables labeled “no added salt.”

Look for cue words

Items that are “**pickled**,” “**brined**,” or “**cured**” tend to be high in sodium. Include these foods in your meals sparingly.

Put together meals at home

- Making your own meals gives you more control over the salt you eat
- Taste your food before adding salt from the shaker

Go easy on the sauce

- Be mindful of how much sauce, gravy, ketchup, soy sauce, or dressing you are using.

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FOOD SAFETY BASICS

Keeping food safe is as easy as **Clean, Separate, Cook and Chill.**



Clean: Wash Hands and Surfaces Often

Bacteria can be spread all around the kitchen and get onto hands, cutting boards, utensils, counter tops, and food. Be sure to keep your cooking area clean as possible.

- ✓ Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after touching food, and after using the bathroom or changing diapers.
- ✓ Wash your hands after playing with pets
- ✓ Wash your cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and countertops with hot soapy water after preparing each food item and before you go on to the next food
- ✓ Think about using paper towels to clean up kitchen surfaces. If you use cloth towels, wash them in the hot cycle when doing laundry
- ✓ Wash fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water, including those with skins and rinds that you do not eat.
- ✓ Rub firm-skinned fruits and vegetables under running tap water
- ✓ Keep books, backpacks or shopping bags off the kitchen table or counters where you are making or eating food.



Separate: Do not Cross-Contaminate

Cross-contamination is how bacteria spread. When handling raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs, keep them and their juices away from ready-to-eat foods.

- ✓ Separate raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs from other foods in your grocery shopping cart, bags and in the refrigerator
- ✓ Use one cutting board for vegetables and fruit, and a different one for raw meat, poultry, and seafood

...To be continued next issue...

Reprinted from:

<https://eatgathergo.org/eat/cooking/food-safety-basics/>



OF OUR BELOVED MOTHER

Mildred "Miss" Bovell
(1922-2013)



Remembering the Matriarch of Bovell
Cancer Diabetes Foundation – Gone 10+y

Our Mother kept a garden,
A garden of the heart.
She planted all the good things,
That gave our lives the start.
She turned us to the sunshine,
And encouraged us to dream:
Fostering and nurturing
The seeds of self-esteem.
And when the winds and rains came,
She protected us enough,
But not too much, she knew we would need
To stand up strong and tough.
Her constant good example,
Always taught us right from wrong.
Markers for our pathways
To last our whole lives long.
We are our Mother's garden,
We are her legacy.
And we hope today she feels the love,
Reflected back from us. Anon

**From your children, grandchildren,
great grandchildren, friends and
your BCDF Family - RIP!** ♥

Continued from page 1... Be Salt Smart...

The sodium from these can add up quickly.

Spice it up

- Flavor your foods with fresh or dried herbs and spices instead of salt
- Pick spice blends that do not list salt or sodium on the ingredients list

Healthy Food Preparation

Healthy eating is important at every age. Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy. When deciding what to eat or drink, choose options that are full of nutrients and limited in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. Start with these tips:

Think balance

- Include a variety of delicious foods from all six food groups – staples, fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, etc. when making meals

Chop fresh produce in advance

- Cut up fresh fruits like melons and pineapples, and vegetables like carrots and broccoli, when you have a few minutes. Store them in the fridge for meals and snacks

Bake, grill, broil, or roast

- Limit frying—especially deep frying—to reduce saturated fat and calories in the dishes you make. Most recipes can be adapted for healthier cooking methods

Sweeten foods with fruit

- Mix fruit into plain yoghurt, cooked oatmeal, and smoothies to sweeten without adding sugar or use plain yoghurt, uncooked oats, and fruit for some overnight oats

Find more flavor

- Add a squeeze of lemon or lime juice to cooked vegetables and meat, chicken, or fish
- Experiment with low-salt herbs and spices

Read food labels

- Use the Nutrition Facts label to find out how much added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium (salt) are in the packaged foods you eat
- Adjust your cooking methods and other ingredients accordingly

Make Healthier Beverage Choices

At every age, what you drink can be as important as what you eat. When deciding what to drink, choose options that are full of nutrients and limited in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. Start simple with these tips today:

Drink water

- Drink water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages. Regular sweet drinks, energy or sports drinks, and other sweetened drinks usually contain a lot of added sugars
- Encourage children-friendly drinks
- Make water, low-fat or fat-free dairy milk, or unsweetened seltzer the go-to options for your children
- Serve 100% juice all the time

Compare food labels

- Use the Nutrition Facts label when shopping for beverages
- Check and compare calories, amounts of added sugars, and servings per containers

Cut coffee calories

- Go with low-fat milk and a sprinkle of cinnamon or nutmeg for a lower calorie coffee
- Carry a clean, reusable water bottle in your bag to fill up throughout the day. Tap water is usually easy to find

Jazz up your drink

- Perk up your plain water or seltzer water with lemon, lime, or orange slices
- Maybe even try some fresh mint leaves or thinly sliced cucumber



Reprinted from:

<https://www.myplate.gov/resources/print-materials?>

WHAT IS NUTRITION AND WHY IS NUTRITION IMPORTANT?

Nutrition is about eating a regular, balanced diet. Good nutrition helps fuel your body. The foods you eat supply the nutrients your body needs to maintain your brain, muscle, bone, nerves, skin, blood circulation, and immune system. Proper nutrition also helps protect you from illness and disease, such as heart disease, diabetes, cancer, and osteoporosis. There are two major classes of nutrients in food: macronutrients and micronutrients. **Macronutrients** are carbohydrates, protein, and fat. They supply energy (in the form of calories) and serve as the building blocks for muscles and tissues. In comparison, **micronutrients** are individual vitamins and minerals. They are divided into four categories: water-soluble vitamins, fat-soluble vitamins, microminerals, and trace minerals.

Healthy Eating Plans. All healthy eating plans have these basic principles in common:

Plant foods - vegetables, fruits, legumes, whole grains, nuts, and seeds—offer a wealth of vitamins and minerals. They also contain fiber and healthful compounds called phytochemicals, natural substances in plants that provide a range of health benefits, including antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and even anti-cancer activity.

Adequate protein. Abundant research shows it is essential to eat enough protein. There are many protein sources, but plant protein (beans, lentils, soy foods, nuts, seeds) and fish offer the most health benefits

Minimally processed foods. A diet high in ultra-processed foods causes weight gain and unhealthy shifts in blood sugar and cholesterol. Food processing often strips away nutrients while adding extra fats, sugars, sodium, additives, and preservatives

Limited saturated fats, added sugars, and sodium. It is recommended limiting saturated fat intake to less than 10% of daily calories. Similarly, for added sugars (sugars added during processing). For sodium, keep it below 2,300 milligrams (mg) per day.

Reprinted from:

SUGARY DRINKS



Sugary drinks (also categorized as sugar-sweetened beverages or “soft” drinks) refer to any beverage with added sugar or other sweeteners (high fructose corn syrup, sucrose, fruit juice concentrates, and more). This includes sweet drink, colas, tonic, fruit punch, lemonade (and other ‘ades’), sweetened powdered drinks, as well as sports and energy drinks. In Trinidad and Tobago, sugary drink consumption is rising dramatically.

How sweet is it?



There are **4.2 grams of sugar in a single teaspoon**. Now, imagine scooping up 7 to 10 teaspoons full of sugar and dumping it into your 12-ounce glass of water. Does that sound too sweet? You may be surprised to learn that is how much added sugar is in the typical can of sweet drink. This can be a useful tip to visualize just how much sugar is in your drink.

Energy Drinks



Aside from sweet drinks, energy drinks have as much sugar as soft drinks, enough caffeine to raise your blood pressure, and additives whose long-term health effects are unknown. For these reasons, it is best to skip energy drinks. Energy drinks are designed to give athletes carbohydrates, electrolytes, and fluid during high-intensity workouts that last one hour or more, for everyone else they are just another source of calories and sugar.

Sugary drinks and health

When it comes to ranking beverages best for our health, sugary drinks fall at the bottom of the list because they provide so many calories and virtually no other nutrients. People who drink sugary beverages do not feel as full as if they had eaten the same calories from solid food, and research indicates they also do not compensate for the high caloric content of these beverages by eating less food. The average can of sugar-sweetened soda or fruit punch provides about 150 calories, almost all of them from added sugar. If you were to drink just one of these sugary drinks every day, and not cut back on calories elsewhere, you could **gain up to 5 pounds in a year**. Beyond weight gain, routinely drinking these sugar-loaded beverages can increase the risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and other chronic diseases. Furthermore, higher consumption of sugary beverages has been linked with an increased risk of premature death.

Reprinted from:

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/healthy-drinks/sugary-drinks/>

BACK TO BASICS



Vary your Vegetables

Not all vegetables are the same. Seriously! There are basically 4 different groups— dark-green vegetables, red and orange vegetables, legumes (beans and peas) and starchy vegetables. Take a look at these tips to learn how to bring these perfect pieces of good nutrition to your kitchen:

- Buy fresh vegetables in season. They cost less and are more flavourful

- Buy vegetables that are easy to prepare
- Use a microwave to quickly “zap” vegetables. You can cook potatoes or sweet potatoes quickly this way
- Vary your vegetable choices to keep meals interesting
- Try crunchy vegetables raw or lightly steamed



Make Half your Grains Whole Grains

Grains. They are in so many of our favourite foods and can be good for us, especially if they are whole grains. Examples of **WHOLE** grains include whole-wheat flour, bulgur (cracked wheat), oatmeal, whole cornmeal, and brown rice. Some examples of **REFINED** grains include white flour, white rice, and white bread. Try to make at least half of the grains you eat whole grains. Whole grains contain important nutrients and may help reduce your cholesterol levels or lower your risk of heart disease, obesity, and type 2 diabetes.

- Fibre from whole grains is also important for good bowel function
- Choose whole grains to help you feel full while eating fewer calories
- Get in the habit of reading the Nutrition Facts label on products. Make sure you are getting whole grains. Look for the first ingredient to say, “whole grains” or “whole wheat”
- Try eating whole grain snacks. These include whole grain cereal, whole grain crackers and popcorn, if made without added salt or butter



Vary your Protein Routine

Foods with protein can come from animals (seafood, meat, poultry, and eggs) and plants (nuts, beans and peas, seeds, and soy products). Protein helps you or your family grow strong, and can make you feel full, longer. Here are some things to think about when buying protein-rich foods:

- If you use red meats, choose lean ground beef. To be considered “lean,” it has to be at least 92% lean/8% fat
- Buy skinless chicken parts, or take off the skin before cooking
- Boneless skinless chicken breasts and turkey cutlets are the leanest poultry choices
- Leaner is better. The leanest beef cuts include round steaks and roasts (eye of round, top round, bottom round, round tip), top loin, top sirloin, and chuck shoulder and arm roasts.
- The leanest pork choices include ham, pork loin, tenderloin, and center loin.
- Choose lean turkey, roast beef, ham, or low-fat lunchmeats for sandwiches instead of lunch meats with more fat, such as regular bologna or salami.
- Choose seafood at least twice a week as your main protein food. Look for seafood rich in omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon
- Choose beans, peas, or soy products as a main dish or as a side dish



Dairy

Dairy can be good for you, especially when it is low-fat or fat-free. Getting more dairy in your diet is easy as drinking milk, eating yoghurt and cheese. Here are some healthy ways to put more dairy in your life:

- Include milk as a drink at meals
- Choose fat-free or low-fat milk
- If you usually drink whole milk, switch gradually to fat-free milk to lower saturated fat and calories. Try reduced fat (2%), then low-fat milk and yoghurt (1%), and finally fat-free (skim)
- Add fat-free or low-fat milk instead of water to oatmeal and hot cereals
- Use fat-free or low-fat milk in cooking
- Eat fat-free or low-fat yoghurt as a snack
- Make a dip from yoghurt for fruits or vegetables

Reprinted from:
<https://eatgathergo.org/eat/planning/nutrition-basics/>

RECIPE

Roasted Beet



Prep Time:
5 minutes



Cook Time:
45-60 min



Servings:
4

Ingredients:

1-pound (3 to 4 medium) beets
 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
 1/4 teaspoon salt (optional)
 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Directions:

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
3. Scrub beets under cold running water; use a clean vegetable brush if you have one.
4. Trim the stem and root ends of each beet to about one inch. Place the beets on a piece of foil, drizzle with olive oil and seal edges closed. Foil keeps the beets moist and makes clean-up easy.
5. Place the beets on a baking sheet. Roast for 45 to 60 minutes until they can be pierced to the center with a dull knife. Open foil carefully when testing for doneness.
6. When beets are cool enough to handle, slice off ends and remove skin if desired.
7. Season with salt and pepper. Serve now or use in another recipe.
8. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours

Reprinted from:
<https://eatgathergo.org/recipe/roasted-beets/>