



# Free Foods!

For people with Diabetes, free foods are good choices for snacking or as flavor enhancers.

Many 'free foods' are very flavorful and can really improve the taste of your meal.

According to the American Diabetes Association, a 'free food' has **less than 5 grams of carbohydrates** and **20 calories** per serving. Some free foods can be enjoyed often, while others should be monitored a bit more but may be eaten up to three times a day. However, you should avoid eating all three servings at one time to prevent elevated blood glucose.

Also, consider eating only one serving of a free food at a meal or snack.

## Cucumbers and Pickles

Cucumbers are a great source of potassium, magnesium, and fiber. Pickles qualify, too, but can be high in sodium (salt); be mindful of your sodium intake. The American Heart Association suggest less than 1,500 mg of sodium a day.



- Use cucumbers instead of chips to dip with
- Slice into water and maybe add fresh mint
- Use slices of cucumber into tuna, chicken or egg salad sandwiches
- Puree cucumbers with herbs, spices, broth, avocado or yogurt and serve as a hot or cold soup

**Each of these count as a FREE FOOD serving:**

- ½ cup cucumbers
  - 1 ½ med dill pickles
  - ¾ oz gherkin pickles
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## Cabbage and Broccoli

Cabbage and broccoli are non-starchy vegetable that's an excellent source of vitamins K and C and rich in antioxidants.



- Add shredded cabbage to broth-base soups or stews to make them more filling.
- Use sturdy cabbage leaves instead of tortillas or bread to wrap up taco or sandwich fillings.
- Slowly simmer cabbage leaves in broth or vinegar; the long, low heat brings out their sweetness.

**Each of these count as a FREE FOOD serving:**

- ½ cup shredded raw cabbage
  - 6 fresh cabbage leaves
  - ¾ cup broccoli
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## Leafy Greens

Darker color leafy greens tend to be more nutrient-rich than lighter varieties. Two cups of fresh romaine or spinach is just 20 calories and provides you with 100 percent of your daily needs for vitamins A and K, plus a hefty dose of vitamin C and folate.



- Take boat-shaped lettuce leaves like endive and use them to scoop up salsas and dips
- Sauté spinach with garlic and spices until just wilted, and splash with vinegar before serving
- Use the large leaf lettuce to wrap up sandwich fillings

**2 cups** fresh counts as a **FREE FOOD** serving and about **½ cup cooked**.

Spinach

½ cup cooked Okra, Greens or Cabbage

Lettuces

Eat leafy greens in moderate amounts as often as you like.

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## Low-sodium Broth

Homemade broth can be rich and nutrients. But, if you don't have the time use a packed low-sodium or sodium-free bullion. Use fat-free broth or bullion in moderate amounts as often as you like.



- Poach or boil chicken or turkey breast in it, shred the meat and use it in a salad or sandwich
  - Cook rice or other grains to enhance the flavor
  - Sautee vegetables with broth instead of oil to prevent sticking
  - Make broth-based soups. Use vegetables, herbs and spices, onions, carrots, squash, zucchini, kale or spinach
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## Vinegars

Vinegar is a virtually calorie-free and a low-sodium ingredient. There are studies that show blood sugar and appetite lowering effects by using vinegar.



- Splash **balsamic vinegar** over mixed greens, sliced tomatoes, or strawberries
  - Splash **red wine vinegar** onto grilled vegetables just before serving.
  - Dip baked fries in **malt vinegar**.
  - Try dipping whole-grain rolls into flavored vinegars such as **garlic, basil, or chile**.
  - Combine vinegar with spices or herbs to create a flavorful meat marinade -- perfect for tenderizing tougher cuts of meat.
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