**Word count 768**

**2017 01.10 Health Matters**

**Food Choices for Prediabetes**

**Joe**

**This is Health Matters, continuing our report on prediabetes.**

**This week we are reporting on the best foods for lowering blood sugar levels.**

**Kristen**

**All carbohydrates raise blood sugar. So it’s logical to conclude that if you’re prediabetic you should limit your carbohydrate intake. By how much is the question. Because carbohydrates are essential to health. So eliminating them altogether does not make sense for someone diagnosed as prediabetic.**

**Joe**

**People with full blown diabetes may be told by their doctor to severely limit carbohydrates. But drastic limits are not necessary when your condition is only prediabetic. You may have already been advised which carbohydrates to avoid. You may know you should avoid sugar-laden sweets like cookies, candy, cake and pastries. If you can manage to stop eating sugary foods altogether, you’ll be well on your way to preventing a slide into type 2 diabetes.**

**Taushona**

**There is a simple guideline to which carbohydrates are suitable for the prediabetic. It’s called the Glycemic (gleye-SEAM-ick) Index. And all it means is that some carbohydrates raise blood sugar faster than others. Carbohydrates that have a high glycemic index cause blood sugar levels to spike. When you know which foods cause spikes, you can avoid them. For example, processed foods have a high glycemic index. As do canned foods.**

**Kristen**

**Unfortunately, packaged foods are not required to list a glycemic index. So here are some tips of which foods spike blood sugar levels. In general, cooked foods raise blood sugar more quickly than raw foods do. Which is not to say avoid cooked foods. Rather, make sure you eat raw foods like salad and fresh fruit along with cooked foods.**

**Joe**

**In fact, mixed meals are a tried and true way to lower any food’s glycemic index. For example white rice is a high glycemic food. But if you eat it with vegetables and chicken or fish, this slows down the digestion of the rice. Which in turn helps to minimize blood sugar spikes.**

**Taushona**

**Refined carbohydrates like white rice are high on the glycemic scale. Other examples include white bread and crackers, highly processed snack foods, soda and juice. To insure that your blood sugar levels stay close to normal, avoid or minimize your intake of these foods.**

**Kristen**

**Foods with a medium glycemic index include whole grain bread and brown rice, which are considered fine to eat. But best of all are foods with a low glycemic index. And there are a number of them. You don’t need to feel deprived with a daily diet that includes low glycemic foods. And you may want to try out unfamiliar foods. For example, steel-cut oats is an excellent low glycemic food. Instant oatmeal or rolled oats are more highly processed than steel-cut oats..**

**Joe**

**Steel-cut oats have so many nutritional benefits they should be a staple in everyone’s diet. For one thing, oats lower cholesterol levels. And oats are high fiber, which helps prevent heart disease. Oats enhance the immune response. Steel-cut oats take longer to cook. But if you soak them overnight, they cook up much faster.**

**Taushona**

**Non-starchy vegetables such as squash and carrots have a low glycemic index. As do leafy greens, especially daily salad greens. Other low glycemic carbohydrates include sweet potatoes, corn, stone-ground whole wheat bread and pasta, quinoa and barley. Beans and legumes are also excellent low glycemic foods.**

**Kristen**

**Like oats, beans and legumes are high fiber, which means they help you feel fuller longer. Fiber rich foods leave you less likely to overeat. And that’s another reason to avoid refined carbohydrates – they contain little fiber.**

**Joe**

**Beans are a good protein food. And talking about protein, the best protein for keeping blood sugar levels is fish. Especially salmon, which is at the top of the list. Other oily fishes, like mackerel and sardines, are also good. These types of fish deliver the omega-3 fatty acids that are so important to cardiovascular health. Skinless chicken and turkey, soy, and lean cuts of meat are also healthy choices.**

**Taushona**

**Healthy fats are important for everyone. And just to recap the healthiest fats, they are: olive, peanut and canola oil as well as the fat found in avocado and nuts.**

**Joe**

**Health Matters is a production of KIDE Hoopa CA.  Produced and written by Cynthia Poten. Engineered by Joseph Orozco.  Our readers were Kristen Marshall, David Moon and Joseph Orozco.  For this audio and more information, visit our download area at  www.kidefm.org. Thank you for listening. Your health adds to the health of our community.**

**Sources and Links**

**http://www.healthline.com/health/diabetes/prediabetes-diet#Healthyeating2The Right Diet for**

[**http://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/16/health/youre-prediabetic-join-the-club.html**](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/16/health/youre-prediabetic-join-the-club.html)

[**http://newoldage.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/12/26/diabetes-prevention-that-works/?\_r=1**](http://newoldage.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/12/26/diabetes-prevention-that-works/?_r=1)

[**http://www.nytimes.com/health/guides/disease/type-2-diabetes/overview.html**](http://www.nytimes.com/health/guides/disease/type-2-diabetes/overview.html)

[**http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/31/upshot/the-unsung-success-of-a-diabetes-prevention-program.html**](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/31/upshot/the-unsung-success-of-a-diabetes-prevention-program.html)

[**http://www.diabetes.org/food-and-fitness/food/what-can-i-eat/food-tips/snacks.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/**](http://www.diabetes.org/food-and-fitness/food/what-can-i-eat/food-tips/snacks.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/)