

# Diabetes and the Heart Foundation Tick Programme

## What is the Heart Foundation Tick Programme?

The Heart Foundation Tick represents healthier choices in more than 50 food types and covers almost 1,000 products. Tick-approved foods have the Tick logo on packaging, and provide a quick and easy guide to identifying healthier foods within a food type. Everyday foods make up over 90 per cent of Tick products, including foods like bread, milk, meat and breakfast cereals.

The public health goal of the Tick is to improve the foods that New Zealanders eat. The Tick Programme encourages food manufacturers to produce foods consistent with the Tick's nutrition guidelines. For a food to get the Tick, it needs to meet a healthier nutrition standard specific to its particular food type.

Tick-approved products are generally lower in saturated fat, trans fat, sodium and energy when compared to similar types of food.

### Who is the Tick for?

The Tick Programme aims to help healthy people without a chronic condition make healthier food choices quickly and easily.

### What does the Tick mean for people with diabetes?

The Tick's nutrition guidelines do not specifically address the needs of people with diabetes or other chronic conditions. Individual health conditions are too varied to be adequately managed by a public health programme alone. That is why people with specific health concerns should always consult and follow the advice of their healthcare team.

The Tick does not account for carbohydrate in a food, which is an important consideration for people with diabetes. People with diabetes can still eat some Tick-approved products, provided they fit within the total carbohydrate recommendations for that meal.

If you are faced with making a choice about everyday foods then the Tick could be used as an initial guide before reading the finer detail on the nutrition information panel. All foods with the Tick must be eaten in recommended portion sizes; just because it has the Tick doesn't mean you can eat more in a sitting or have it more often.

- Follow the Diabetes New Zealand Healthy Eating plan
- The kind and amount of carbohydrate (starchy foods and sugar) eaten directly affects blood glucose levels.

- The kind and amount of fat eaten affects the risk of having a heart attack or a stroke.
- People with diabetes do not need to buy special foods or cook separate meals. The whole family can eat the same healthy foods.
- Drink plenty of water. Stop drinking fruit juice and sugar-sweetened drinks.
- Eat breakfast, lunch and dinner every day.
- Eat some carbohydrate at each meal, but not too much.
- Stop eating foods high in sugar.
- Choose foods low in fat.
- Follow the Diabetes New Zealand Healthy Plate.

Food needs to be matched to weight, medications, medical conditions and activity. For an ideal eating plan, advice from a dietitian is recommended.

### Sugar

The Tick's nutrition guidelines generally do not include standards for added or total sugars so some products will still be high in sugar, such as some muesli bars and ice cream.

### Energy

The Tick aims to reduce total energy and also limit serving sizes, particularly of occasional or snack foods. This is important if you are watching your body weight.

### Treat foods

The Tick appears on selected treat foods such as ice cream, pies and pastries. The Tick nutrition criteria for these foods aims to reduce the levels of saturated fat, trans fat, sodium and energy when compared with other similar occasional foods.

These foods may be able to be eaten occasionally by people with diabetes in the context of a balanced diet. Many of these treat foods contain high amounts of carbohydrate and they will increase your blood glucose levels.

Further information on nutrition and food for people with diabetes can be found at [www.diabetes.org.nz](http://www.diabetes.org.nz)



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HEALTHIER CHOICES FOR HEALTHIER NEW ZEALANDERS