

Diabetes and the Ramadan

Inspiration and recipes





The Ramadan – a time for gathering and good food

There are many delicacies during the fasting period, you can enjoy eating even if you have to keep your blood sugar level and your weight stable. In this leaflet, we offer you inspiration on how to deal with all the delicacies that will be offered to you during the fasting month.

The leaflet includes a table of the amount of carbohydrates in various types of snacks and sweets. To make it easier for you, we have also calculated the carbohydrate contents of selected dishes. You will find these dishes at the end of the leaflet.

Carbohydrates in the food

The carbohydrates in the food are the primary cause of rising blood sugar levels. The following are examples of food with carbohydrates:

- Rice
- Pasta
- Potatoes
- Bulgur
- Bread
- Milk
- Fruits - fresh and dried
- Fruit juice
- Sugar
- Cookies/cakes/candy
- Grain
- Flour made from corn, rice or other types of cereal.

The more carbohydrates you eat, the more your blood sugar level will rise. Some food types do not affect your blood sugar level and including these in every meal will be beneficial to you. For example:

- Meat and poultry
- Fish
- Eggs
- Vegetables
- Nuts and almonds.

Kind regards from the Dietitians

Below, you will find a list of recommendations from the Steno Diabetes Center Copenhagen (SDCC) dietitians that will help you maintain your weight and a sensible blood sugar level while allowing you to enjoy the foods and social gatherings of the Ramadan month:

- eat small dates instead of large dates when you are breaking the fast;
- always include vegetables, salads or fresh fruit in your meals;
- it is a good idea to put vegetables on your plate first and then pick the other dishes;
- in case of buffets or similar: begin by checking which dishes are available before selecting the food you want to eat;
- if you want to try several dishes, eat only smaller servings of each;
- eat slowly, enjoy the food and pay attention to when you start to feel satiated;
- limit the amount of sweet things;
- opt for tea without sugar, or use sweeteners;
- drink plenty of fluids (sugar-free), particularly water.

Keep an eye on the amount of carbohydrates

Typically, the Ramadan season will be full of fast-digesting carbohydrates in concentrated amounts. Pay attention to how many carbohydrates you consume. For example, a main course contains between 40 g and 70 g carbohydrates and a snack between 20 g and 30 g carbohydrates.

On days with a high physical activity level, you need more carbohydrates than on days with less activity.

Insulin therapy

If you are using **fast-acting insulin** in connection with your meals, you could take additional insulin if you are eating more carbohydrates than you normally do. You should be aware that additional carbohydrates will affect your weight as well.

Physical activities also contribute to keeping your blood sugar level stable. For example, you could take the stairs instead of the elevator, go for walk or a bicycle ride or do domestic work.



Beef Sambusa. Recipe on page 16.



The carbohydrate contents in fruits, nuts and snacks:

Quantity	Foods	Carbohydrates, g (grams)
3	Dates (large) seedless	37 g
3	Dates (small) seedless	17 g
1 slice, 200 g	Watermelon without skin	16 g
1	Orange	12 g
1 handful	Grapes	10 g
1	Large mandarin or 2 small	10 g
1	Crackers (Digestive)	10 g
1 handful	Potato chips	10 g
20 g	Milk chocolate	10 g
20 g	Dark chocolate	6 g
2-3	Dried apricots	10 g
1 handful, approx. 20 g	Sunflower seeds	2 g
1 small handful, approx. 20 g	Pistachio nuts	3 g
1 small handful, approx. 20 g	Almonds	2 g
1 small handful, approx. 20 g	Hazel nuts	4 g
1 small handful, approx. 20 g	Walnuts	2 g
1 small, 25 g	Marzipan bar	10 g

For fruits requiring peeling (such as oranges or mandarins), only the eatable parts are included in the table.

Recipes

On the following pages you will find recipes for selected dishes.

Thank you to 'Send Flere Krydderier', Amaal Tawane Sabriye, Aysegül Öztürk and Hacer Cakmak who prepared the food presented in this leaflet.

Tarhana soup

Serves 5

Ingredients

4 tbsp tarhana
1 tbsp butter
1 tbsp rapeseed oil
1 tbsp concentrated tomato paste
1 L water
1 tsp salt
½ tsp dried mint
½ tsp dried chili flakes

Directions

1. Melt the butter and the oil together in a pot at medium heat.
2. Add tarhana and sauté for 1 minute.
3. Add 2 dL water and stir thoroughly for 2-3 minutes until the tarhana has dissolved.
4. Add tomato paste and stir again for 1-2 minutes.
5. Pour the remaining water into the pot and bring to the boil while stirring constantly.
6. When the soup is boiling, turn down the heat and allow it to simmer for 5 minutes, stirring.
7. Season with salt.
8. Serve the soup with sprinkles of mint and chili.

Tip: Add 1 dL boiled white beans and allow the soup to boil for another 2 minutes.

One serving (approx. 2 dL) *without* white beans contains 6 g carbohydrates.
One serving (approx. 2 dL) *with* white beans contains 9 g carbohydrates.

Halwa

25 slices

Ingredients

230 g water

220 g sugar

30 g corn starch, e.g. Maizena

55 g rapeseed oil

25 g peanuts (roasted and salted)

1 pinch (¼ mL) of ground cloves

½ tsp ground cardamom

1 pinch (¼ mL) of safran

Directions

1. Bring sugar and water to a boil.
 2. Dissolve Maizena and safran in ½ dL water and stir it into the boiling sugar mixture.
 3. Add the oil little by little when the mass begins to thicken.
 4. Add the cloves and cardamom.
 5. Turn down the heat but keep stirring the mass for about 30 minutes, until suitably firm.
 6. Pour the mass onto a sheet of baking paper and allow it to cool.
 7. Cut the mass into approx. 25 slices and serve.
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One 20 g slice contains 10 g carbohydrates.



Börek

10-12 pcs.

Ingredients

400 g phyllo dough
250 g crumbled feta cheese
100 g grated cheese
3 tbsp finely chopped flat-leaf parsley
2 eggs
½ dL rapeseed oil
1 dL semi-skimmed milk
1 tbsp sesame seeds

Directions

1. Mix the crated cheese and crumbled feta cheese with the finely chopped parsley in a bowl.
2. Beat the eggs, oil and milk together in another bowl.
3. Place a layer of phyllo dough on the bottom of a greased roasting pan, brush with egg mass, add another layer of phyllo dough and brush again with egg mass.
4. Now add half of the cheese mixture.
5. Repeat this process with two layers of phyllo dough with egg mass between the layers.
6. Add the remaining cheese mixture and finish off with two layers of phyllo dough, egg mass and a sprinkle of sesame seeds.
7. Bake the dish in the oven at 200°C for about 20-25 minutes.
8. Cut the slightly cooled börek into 10 or 12 pieces.

One 85 g piece contains approx. 11 g carbohydrates.





Beer

Serves 4

Ingredients

400 g sliced lamb liver
1 sliced medium-sized onion
½ sliced green bell pepper
1 chopped green chili
The juice of a ½ lime
1 tsp ground coriander
1 handful roughly chopped fresh coriander
Salt
Pepper
2 tbsp rapeseed oil
1 tomato, chopped

Directions

1. Sauté the onion slices in oil until soft.
2. Add the chopped tomato and continue frying for about 1 minute.
3. Add the sliced bell pepper, chopped chili, lime juice and ground coriander, and stir.
4. Add the sliced liver and continue frying for another 2-3 minutes.
5. Check if the liver is cooked (be careful to prevent it from becoming dry) and season with salt and pepper.
6. Sprinkle the dish with fresh coriander.

One 200 g serving contains approx. 6 g carbohydrates.

Beef Sambusa

16 pieces

Ingredients, dough

1 ¼ dL water
½ tsp salt
250 g wheat flour
¼ dL rapeseed oil

Ingredients, beef filling

400 g ground beef
2 fresh chilis
2 garlic cloves
1 tsp Vegeta
1 small bundle of fresh coriander
1 spring onion
½ green bell pepper
1 red onion
The juice of a ½ lime
1 tbsp garam masala

Directions, dough

1. Pour water into a bowl and dissolve the salt.
2. Mix in the flour little by little and keep stirring until the dough starts to firm up.
3. Knead with your hands for 2-3 minutes. The dough should be smooth and firm in order to be rolled out later. Use more flour if it is still wet.
4. Allow the dough to rest for 30 minutes at room temperature.
5. Then split the dough into 4 round balls of equal size.
6. Roll out two of the balls to two circles approx. 14 cm across. Sprinkle the circles with flour on both sides to prevent sticking.
7. Brush one circle with oil and place the other one on top of it.
8. Now roll out the combined dough to a new circle approx. 28 cm across.
9. Do the same with the other two dough balls.
10. Heat a pan with a suitable diameter to medium heat. Leave one of the 28 cm circles on the pan for about 30 s. Flip it and warm the other side for another 30 s as well. The dough is not supposed to bake but merely to dry to make it less porous yet still soft and elastic to work with.

11. When removed from the pan, immediately split the two pieces of dough and place them on a plate under cover to keep them soft.
12. Repeat this process with the other combined piece of dough.

Directions, beef filling

1. Fry the meat at relatively high heat for about 5 minutes.
2. Split the chilis, remove the seeds and chop them into small pieces. Do not remove the seeds from the chilis if you want your beef mixture to be hot. Add the chopped chilis to the pot with the meat and fry for about 5 minutes.
3. Add crushed garlic, Vegeta and salt, and fry for another 3-4 minutes.
4. Chop the coriander, spring onion, bell pepper and red onion finely, and add lime juice and garam masala. Fry for about 5 minutes, and season with salt. The meat mixture should be fried to a relatively dry state without excess fluids and the vegetables should be somewhat pungent.

Preparation

1. Take a round dough plate and cut it into quarters. Place one piece in front of you on the counter, with the rounded edge facing you and the pointed end facing away from you.
2. Fold the right and left 'corners' over one another, leaving the dough cone-shaped with the tip facing you. Apply flour paste (equal parts water and flour) on the overlapping surfaces and press them together.
3. Fill the cone with sambusa filling. Do not fill it entirely as you will need to close the sambusa.
4. Close the last side so that the sambusa becomes triangular. Apply plenty of flour paste and press all edges and surfaces firmly together. When you have no filling left, the sambusas are ready for frying.
5. Pour rapeseed oil into a pot and heat it. Use a sufficient amount of oil to cover the sambusas entirely. When the oil is warm, fry the sambusas little by little for 3-5 minutes and flip them occasionally.

The sambusas are ready when they are golden and crisp. Remove the sambusas from the pot and place them on a plate covered with paper towel to absorb excess oil.

One 75 g sambusa contains 13 g carbohydrates.

Photo of Beef Sambusa, page 5.



Revani

35

Ingredients

6 dL semi-skimmed milk
 3 dL sugar
 3 medium-sized eggs
 3 dL sugar
 2 dL semi-skimmed milk
 2 dL rapeseed oil
 3 dL semolina
 3 dL wheat flour
 1½ tsp baking powder
 5 g vanilla sugar

Directions, sirup

1. Pour 6 dL milk and 3 dL sugar into a pot and bring it to the boil, and stir until the sugar has dissolved.
2. Turn down the heat and allow the sirup to simmer with no lid for about 10 minutes until it starts to thicken.
3. Allow the sirup to cool while you make the cake.

Directions, cake

1. Beat 3 eggs and 2 dL sugar until the mass is thick and foaming.
2. Add the other ingredients and beat the dough thoroughly.
3. Pour the dough into a greased baking pan, approx. 20x35 cm.
4. Bake the cake for 30 minutes at 170°C.
5. Spread the cooled sirup across the cake 10 minutes after removing the cake from the oven.
6. Cut the cake into 35 slices (7x5 cm) and decorate it.

Tip: Decorate the cake with finely chopped nuts and a little whipped cream.

One 50 g slice contains 22 g carbohydrates.

Baklava

35 pieces

Ingredients

400 g phyllo dough
3½ dL rapeseed oil
5 dL chopped walnuts
2½ dL sesame seeds
6 dL sugar
6 dL water

Directions

1. Grease a 20x35 cm roasting pan with oil.
 2. Place 4 phyllo dough layers on the bottom of a roasting pan, brush with oil and sprinkle with finely chopped walnuts and sesame seeds.
 3. Now add 2 layers of phyllo dough, brush with oil and sprinkle with walnuts and sesame seeds.
 4. Repeat this process with 2 layers of phyllo dough, oil, sesame seeds and walnuts until only 4 layers of phyllo dough remain for the top!
 5. Use a sharp knife to cut the baklava into 35 small squares (7x5 cm). It is important to cut all the way through.
 6. Heat the remaining oil on a pan and pour it over the baklava.
 7. Bake the baklava in the oven at 180°C for about 40 minutes, until it is golden brown.
 8. Mix water and sugar in a small pot and allow the mixture to simmer for 10 minutes until the sugar has dissolved and the sirup has thickened.
 9. Allow the sirup to cool and then pour it over the cake 10 minutes after removing the cake from the oven.
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Tip: Decorate the baklava with sprinkles of finely chopped pistachio nuts after applying the sirup.

A 50 g piece contains approx. 23 g carbohydrates.





Buskud biscuits

Approx. 90 biscuits

Ingredients

250 g salted butter
200 g sugar
3 large eggs
430 g wheat flour
4 tsp baking powder
2 tsp ground cardamom/cinnamon

Directions

1. Pour butter, sugar and eggs into a bowl and beat the ingredients until you have an airy mass (about 3-5 minutes).
 2. Mix flour, baking powder and cardamom/cinnamon in another bowl.
 3. Add the beat mass to the flour mixture little by little and mix thoroughly.
 4. Pour the dough into a dough gun and place suitable cakes on a piece of baking paper.
 5. Place the cakes in a preheated oven and bake them at 175°C for 12-15 minutes or until they have golden brown edges.
 6. Turn the baking paper around in the oven after 6-8 minutes in order to ensure even cooking of the cakes.
 7. Allow the cakes to cool on the baking paper before placing them in an airtight container for storage.
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One 10 g cake contains 6 g carbohydrates.

Want to know more?

If you would like to learn more on how to handle food at festive occasions in relation to your diabetes, you can book an appointment with a clinical dietitian at Steno Diabetes Center Copenhagen.



**Steno Diabetes Center
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