

# General guidelines for older people with Diabetes

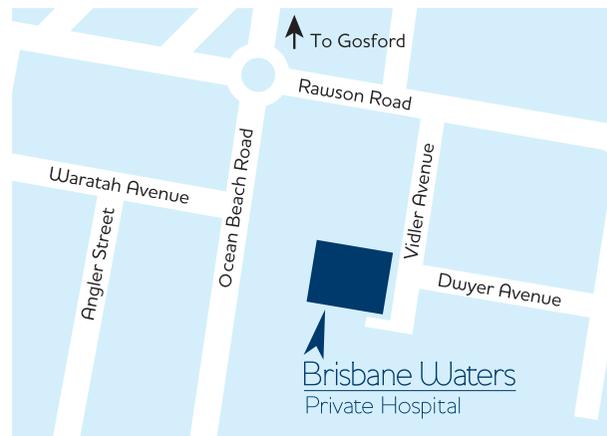
INFORMATION BROCHURE

## Quick tips for managing Diabetes in older people

- Choose a low GI option at each meal
- Be sure to meet your daily recommended intake of nutrients, vitamins and minerals
- Prevent or manage malnutrition
- Diabetics who are already malnourished need to eat more of the right food rather than less of the right food.



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## Guidelines for managing Diabetes in older people

In general the aim of managing your Diabetes is to have consistency in the amount and timing of carbohydrates you consume. It is important to choose a low GI carbohydrate at each meal and to meet your recommended daily intake of nutrients, vitamins and minerals. It is also important to make sure you are eating enough of the right foods to prevent or manage malnutrition.

### Eating regular meals and snacks

- Eating regular meals and spreading carbohydrates through the day can help manage your diabetes, appetite and weight
- Avoid skipping meals
- You may need to include small snacks in between meals or try six (6) small meals instead of three (3) large meals.



## Carbohydrates

- Carbohydrates are the best source of energy for the body. It is the carbohydrates in food that directly affects blood glucose levels as it breaks down to form glucose in the blood stream
- Too much carbohydrates at one time can increase your blood glucose levels
- If you don't eat enough carbohydrates or miss a meal, your blood glucose can go too low (hypoglycaemia) which can cause confusion
- It is important to include a carbohydrate food at each meal.

### Carbohydrate foods

- Cereals and grains e.g. porridge, rice, pasta, biscuits and crackers
- Starchy vegetables and legumes e.g. potato, sweet potato, corn and baked beans
- Dairy products (except cheese/cream) e.g. milk, yoghurt, custard and ice cream
- Fruit e.g. banana, orange, apricots and fruit juice.

### Glycaemic Index (GI)

The GI is a measure of how carbohydrates foods effect blood glucose levels.

- Low GI foods are broken down slowly by the body and have less effect on blood glucose levels
- Including a low GI food at every meal can help control your blood glucose levels
- Examples of low GI foods include legumes, milk, low fat yoghurt and some fruit and vegetables
- If you would like to know more about the GI and for a full list of low GI foods speak with a Dietitian.

## What about Sugar?

- Small amounts of sugar are acceptable e.g. small amounts of sugar in tea/coffee or on cereal. Or jam, honey on bread or in desserts
- It is best to avoid those foods that are high in sugar such as regular soft drink, cordial, jelly, chocolates, chocolate/sweet biscuits and cakes.

## What about Fats?

- Low fat diets are not recommended for the elderly especially those at risk of or who are already malnourished
- Full cream dairy products are the better choice
- Fat used for spreading or cooking should be unsaturated e.g. olive oil and margarine.

## What about Protein?

- Protein is essential to help prevent loss of muscle mass, improved wound healing, decreased risk of infection, decrease risk of fractures and improve bone health
- Sources of protein included meat, fish, chicken, eggs, dairy products, legumes, nuts and seeds
- It is important to try to include a protein source at each meal and snack.