

CAN YOU EAT INTUITIVELY WITH T1 DIABETES?



Intuitive Eating is associated with lower fat tissue and less insulin resistance.
(Weigenberg MJ, 2009)

In teens with T1D, there is a strong association between intuitive eating and lower HbA1c, in particular with a positive effect on emotional eating. (Wheeler BJ, 2015)

Girls who diet frequently are 12 times more likely to binge as girls who don't diet.
(Neumark-Sztainer D, 2007)

YES!

Enjoy Your Food, Respect Your Body

Intuitive Eating Is:

Peace with food
Curiosity
Mindful
Knowledge
Satisfying
Dynamic
Listening Internally
Cognizant of BG

Eat the foods
that make you
feel the best –
both emotionally
and physically

Intuitive Eating is Not

Wild Abandon
Judgement
Restrictive
Rules
Deprivation
Rigid
External signals
Ignorant of BG



PRINCIPLES OF INTUITIVE EATING FOR PEOPLE WITH DIABETES

Reject the Diet Mentality / Respect Your Body

- Consider the consequences of unhealthy weight loss and yo-yo dieting.
- Bodies are not made to be the same (Poodle Science video on YouTube).
- Interrupt your own or anyone else's negative self-talk and weight stigma.
- Take a weight neutral approach to diabetes care ([Eat What You Love, Love What You Eat with Diabetes](#)).

Honor Your Hunger / Feel Your Fullness

- Pay attention to internal cues beyond your taste buds.
- Know the impact of blood glucose on hunger.
- Stop the binge-restrict cycle – eat when you're hungry, stop when you're full (Note: some people lose their hunger and satiety cues with T1D, with patience and attention they can return).
- Be mindful that T1D messes up many metabolic processes, e.g. your pancreas no longer makes amylin.

Make Peace with Food / Discover Satisfaction

- Food has no morality; it is not good or bad.
- There is no should or shouldn't with food.
- It's ok to eat food with enjoyment for taste, social occasions, curiosity, etc.
- Carbs are not evil and not all carbs are the same.

Challenge the Food Police

- There are no rules or laws in T1D, only guidance.
- Talk with people about food choices from a place of kindness rather than judgment.
- The only things people with T1D can't eat are poison and cookies made with poison.

Cope with Your Emotions with Kindness

- BG is just information.
- Differentiate emotional eating from physical triggers ([Emotional Eating with Diabetes](#))
- Gain understanding about your behavior motivation through reflection, journaling, etc.
- Address diabetes distress and burn out.

Movement – Feel the Difference

- Select fun movement that fits your lifestyle and environment.
- Focus on how it makes you feel rather than the should of it.
- Emphasize consistent, gentle movement.

Honor Your Health

- Acknowledge the necessity of using some external cues like blood glucose or time of day.
- Acknowledge the reality of diabetes factors you can't control like hormones, weather, illness, stress, bad pump sites, kinked tubing, other medications, dawn phenomenon, allergies, etc).
- Sometimes you need to choose a salad over a sandwich because your bg is high (and vice versa).

Remember

Close the loop between “eating what you want” and honoring your body with nutrition and health.

You don't have to eat perfectly to be healthy.

Shoot for progress, not perfection.

Respect does not mean disregard.