



Enjoy fried treats occasionally

My wife has type 2 diabetes and has to control her intake of carbs. But she loves fried green tomatoes and could eat them six times a week. Is there a substitute for regular flour she can use?

Actually, the amount of carbohydrate in fried green tomatoes may surprise you. Each serving has about 13 grams, which counts as one carbohydrate exchange in most plans; your wife just needs to take that into account as she enjoys one of her favorite foods.

However, dietitians would probably encourage her to limit her intake — not because of the carbohydrates involved, but because of the fat and calories in fried green tomatoes. Frying any type of food adds a significant amount of calories from fat. Because people with type 2 diabetes are at much greater risk for obesity and heart disease, eating fried foods six times a week probably isn't a good plan.

On the (hopefully) rare occasion when she does indulge, your wife might consider making the treat with whole-wheat flour or whole-grain cornmeal. Opting to use the whole grain contributes fiber to the diet and helps the body absorb carbohydrates more slowly, at a rate that helps control blood sugar.

Overall, though, the message for

any person with diabetes is to adopt a balanced, healthful diet designed to help control blood sugar and maintain a healthy weight. Any nutritious diet includes good portions of vegetables, fruit, whole grains, lean protein and low-fat dairy with a splash of healthful oil. Indulge in high-fat, high-calorie, low-nutrient treats only occasionally.

In addition, the American Dietetic Association recommends that people with diabetes eat meals and snacks at regular, planned times, and to consume about the same amount of food at each meal or snack. Following such a plan will help keep blood sugar levels as stable as possible.

For help in creating a meal plan that works for you, visit the American Diabetes Association website at <http://www.diabetes.org>; choose the "Food and Fitness" tab. It has information on planning meals, counting carbohydrates, consuming normal portion sizes, learning about the glycemic index and how it can be used to control blood sugar, and more.

There's plenty of good information available to help you and your wife learn more. But it's always also helpful to work with a registered dietitian for those out-of-box type of questions ... like fitting fried green tomatoes into a healthy diet.

Chow Line is a service of Ohio State University Extension and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center. Send questions to Chow Line, c/o Martha Filipic, 2021 Coffey Road, Columbus, OH, 43210-1044, or filipic.3@cfaes.osu.edu.



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