

# Keeping a Food Journal

A food journal can be a great way to check in on your current eating habits. It can provide a base for making adjustments, or it can help to track your experience of symptoms or your blood sugars.

You can keep a food journal however is most convenient for you—In a small notebook, on index cards, etc. Write down everything you eat, *as you eat it* (it's more difficult to rely on memory). It's best to keep the journal for at least three days (preferably two weekdays and one weekend day) to get a good sense of what an "average" day looks like. It can also be helpful to record exercise using the same format.

You can journal continuously, or just a few days every month or two. If paper and pen doesn't work well for you, there are also online trackers that you can use (if an app/program is used, please be aware that the features and calorie/diet focus of the applications can be distracting and misleading).

## Tracking:

Use whichever categories are helpful for you in what you're aiming to track, such as:

- \* The date and/or day of the week
- \* Each food item you eat (most helpful if recorded at or just after the time it is eaten)
- \* The amount or size of the food (in a way that makes sense for you—does not need to be precise)
- \* The time and place you ate it
- \* Your level of hunger
- \* Your water intake
- \* Feelings after your meal—were you satisfied? Are you feeling overly full?
- \* Are you having an increase in symptoms? What is your blood sugar?

At the end of the day (or week), you can review your diary and write down your reactions to it. For example: Was this a typical day? Were you making different choices because you were recording what you ate? Did any certain circumstances contribute to the amount or kinds of food you ate?

## Example:

FOOD	AMOUNT	TIME/PLACE	HUNGER LEVEL	FEELING AFTER
Apple	1 medium	6:45am; kitchen counter	Not very hungry; tired	Rushed; overslept
M&Ms	Fistful	10:15am; officemate's cubicle	Starving	Didn't really *need* to eat them
DAILY EXERCISE: 10 minutes of stretching in the morning, 10 minute walk around the block on lunch break, 20 minutes walking the dog in the evening				
THOUGHTS ABOUT TODAY:				