



TO: Diabetes Care and Education Dietetic Practice Group (DCE DPG) members

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TOPIC: Reproduction of the education handout Meal-Replacement Products

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Meal-Replacement Products for People with Diabetes

Meal-replacement products (MRPs) provide a meal or snack alternative for people with diabetes. MRPs may help:

- Stabilize blood glucose (sugar) levels
- Assist with weight loss

MRPs include multi-flavored and ready-to-go drinks, powdered shakes, soups, bars, and puddings. Most are lactose and gluten-free and many offer non-nutritive sweeteners as replacements for some sugars.

Adding regular aerobic exercise most days of the week will not only help with weight loss, but also help maintain a healthy weight long term. Ask your registered dietitian, diabetes educator or health care provider about using MRPs to optimize your health goals.

"Use of meal replacements once or twice daily to replace a usual meal can result in significant weight loss, but meal-replacement therapy must be continued if weight loss is to be maintained."

- The American Diabetes Association

Quick Guide for Selecting the Right MRPs

Calories	190 to 250	For MRPs fewer than 200 calories, add an extra 15 to 20 grams of carbohydrates (about 100 calories) by including fat-free light yogurt, low-fat whole-grain crackers, fresh fruit or fat-free milk. Raw or cooked non-starchy vegetables (which are low in calories but contribute extra fiber, vitamins and minerals) may be eaten with any of the MRPs.
Protein	10 to 15 grams	Adequate protein promotes health and mealtime fullness.
Carbohydrate	14 to 34 grams	To slow the rate blood glucose (sugar) rises after a meal, look for the first carbohydrate listed in the ingredients to be maltodextrin or tapioca dextrin rather than refined sugars, such as sucrose, corn syrup, high-fructose corn syrup or brown rice syrup.
Dietary Fiber	3 to 6 grams	
Total Fat	5 to 8 grams	The primary fat source should be unsaturated fat from vegetable oils rather than saturated fat, such as partially hydrogenated oil, palm oil or coconut oil. All MRPs should be trans-fat free.
Cholesterol	0 to 20 milligrams	
Sodium	100 to 300 milligrams	
Vitamins and Minerals	Look for 50 to 100 percent of the Dietary Reference Intake.	
Avoid products containing stimulants, such as caffeine, ginseng, guarana and ephedra.		

MRPs are effective for weight loss for a variety of reasons other than reducing calories. MRPs:

- Offer a structured calorie-controlled plan without having to count calories or choose what to eat for one or two meals and/or one to two snacks a day
- Help establish a routine for eating meals and snacks at regular times
- Help satisfy a craving for sweets (and help reduce the amount eaten), as many MRPs have a sweet taste
- Save time and require no preparation or refrigeration if unopened (Most fit easily into a purse or briefcase for times when you cannot eat a regular meal.)
- Save money when compared to many other commercial diet plans

Sample Meal Plans Using MRPs

	1,200 Calorie Meal Plan for Weight Loss	1,500 Calorie Meal Plan for Healthy Eating on the Run
	2 MRPs Daily	2 MRPs Daily
Breakfast	Meal-replacement product (about 250 calories and 30 to 34 grams carbohydrates, commonly known as "carbs")	Whole-grain cereal (serving size may vary; include up to 30 grams carbs and at least 3 grams of fiber) 2 tablespoons sliced nuts 1 cup fat-free milk (15 grams carbs)
Snack	1 cup raw non-starchy vegetables (carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, etc.) with fat-free salad dressing (5 grams carbs)	Small fresh fruit (15 grams carbs) with 2 tablespoons nuts
Lunch	3 ounces cooked very lean/lean meat and/or low-fat cheese 2 slices whole-grain bread (30 grams carbs) 1 teaspoon regular mayonnaise 1 cup cooked or 2 cups raw vegetable salad with fat-free salad dressing (10 grams carbs) Small fresh fruit (15 grams carbs)	Meal-replacement product (about 250 calories and 30 to 34 grams carbs)
Snack	6 ounces fat-free light yogurt (15 grams carbs)	Snack-size meal-replacement product (150 calories or less and 14 to 20 grams carbs)
Dinner	Meal-replacement product (about 250 calories and 30 to 34 grams carbs)	4 ounces cooked very lean/lean meat, poultry or fish 1 cup cooked or 2 cups raw vegetable salad with fat-free dressing (10 grams carbs) ½ cooked sweet potato (15 grams carbs) 1 cup cut-up fresh fruit over sugar-free gelatin (15 grams carbs) 1 teaspoon trans-fat free margarine 1 cup fat-free milk (12 grams carbs)
Snack	3 cups popcorn (air-popped with fat-free margarine spray or low-fat microwave) or small fresh fruit (15 grams carbs)	½ toasted whole-grain English muffin or small fresh fruit (15 grams carbs) ½ tablespoon peanut butter or 2 tablespoons nuts
Plus eight 8-ounce glasses of water or other non-caloric beverage.		

Other Reasons MRPs can be Helpful for People with or Without Diabetes

R = Reduced appetite, resulting in inadequate food and/or fluid intake

E = Extra calories, protein, fiber and/or other nutrients required to help:

- Gain weight or prevent weight loss
- Strengthen immune system, especially during cold/flu season
- Enhance energy and strength, which can decrease due to:
 - Natural aging process
 - Brief or longer-term illnesses
 - Stress and/or a hectic lifestyle

A = Altered nutrient absorption due to drugs, treatments or illnesses

S = Swallowing difficulties during/after mouth or throat illness or surgery

O = Obtaining a healthful, balanced meal when it's difficult to prepare or purchase away from home

N = Not having enough time to actually eat a healthful, balanced meal or snack

S = Stabilizing blood glucose levels during and/or after exercise



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For more information: Contact the American Dietetic Association at www.eatright.org or 1-800-366-1655.

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