



knowdiabetes

7-DAY

Healthy Meals On A Budget

Why low carb?

Evidence suggests that low-carb diets are safe and can improve blood glucose levels in the short term, as well as helping to achieve weight loss and reducing the risk of heart disease in people with type 2 diabetes.

If you treat your diabetes with insulin or any other medication that puts you at risk of hypoglycaemia (low blood glucose levels), following a low-carb diet may increase this risk. However, your healthcare team can help you adjust your medications to reduce your risk of hypoglycaemia often called hypos.

Top tip

The [NHS Eatwell Guide](#) suggests we should drink 6 to 8 cups or glasses of fluid a day. Water, lower-fat milk and sugar-free drinks, including tea and coffee, all count.

Abbreviations

pp = per person
g = gram
kg = kilogram
l = litre
ml = millilitre
tsp = teaspoon
tbsp = tablespoon

Portion sizes

A portion is about a handful (80g), for example:

- 4 broccoli florets
- 1 pear
- 3 heaped tablespoons of carrots
- 7-8 strawberries
- 1 slice of brown bread
- 1 plantain
- Half pitta bread

Measuring scale:

- 1 cup = 250ml
- 1/2 cup = 125ml
- 1/3 cup = 80ml
- 1/4 cup = 60ml
- 1 tablespoon = 20ml
- 1 teaspoon = 5ml

How the prices were calculated

When preparing this meal plan, the estimated cost for each dish was calculated on:

1. Buying ingredients in bulk
2. Breakfasts & snacks being for **one person**
3. Lunch & dinner for **four people**

Calculation example: a serving of 250g long grain rice is calculated by checking the price of a larger quantity (e.g. 1kg) and dividing it by the stated ingredient quantity, this is then divided by the number of portions (four):

Step 1: Buy an ingredient in bulk e.g., 1kg pack of rice which costs £0.48

Step 2: Divide the bulk size by the required meal plan quantity (e.g. 250g): 1kg divided by 250g is 4

Step 3: Divide the bulk size cost (step 1) by the meal plan quantity required (step 2): £0.48 divided by 4 is £0.12

Step 4: Calculate the per-person cost by dividing the figure from step 3 by the number of portions (four): £0.12 divided by 4 is £0.03

Step 5: Calculate the rest of the required ingredients for the meal (following steps 1 to 4) and add them together for the total meal cost per-person.

Top tip: check the supermarket labels for the price per grams e.g. per 100g, to see which option is cheapest.

Disclaimer: Calculated costs are from September 2023. For any updates to prices and meal plans, please check the Know Diabetes website.



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
Breakfast - Cost: £0.49 per person (pp) Porridge 30g uncooked oats, 200ml milk, 1 handful of berries (80g) <i>Tip - Use frozen berries, bulk buy milk, buy non-branded muesli</i>	Breakfast - Cost: £0.77 pp Scrambled eggs 2 eggs mixed with a splash of milk on 1 slice medium cut wholemeal toast with 10g veg oil-based spread and 80g sliced tomato <i>Tip - Bulk buy eggs and milk, freeze any leftover bread</i>	Breakfast - Cost: £0.37 pp Muesli and fruit 30g no added sugar muesli, 150ml whole milk and 40g berries <i>Tip - Bulk buy no added sugar non branded muesli and milk, use frozen berries.</i>	Breakfast - Cost: £0.61 pp Wheat biscuit 1 wheat biscuit 100ml semi skimmed milk, 15g raisins and 10g pumpkin seeds <i>Tip - Bulk buy non branded wheat biscuits or any bran based (wholegrain) cereal or muesli</i>
Lunch - Cost: £1.09 pp Roasted carrot & cheese tart (4 people) 650g carrots, 2 tbsp rapeseed oil, salad cheese, crème fraîche, 375g pack lighter puff pastry, 600g new potatoes Side: mixed leaf salad, tomatoes and red onions <i>Tip - Add more vegetables</i>	Lunch - Cost: £1.25 pp Grilled chicken (4 people) 400g grilled chicken breast, 280g new potatoes and 1 tbsp light mayonnaise, frozen peas Side: mixed salad leaves, cherry tomatoes, red onions <i>Tip - Use non branded mayonnaise and try to batch cook the chicken</i>	Lunch - Cost: £0.99 pp Red lentil soup (4 people) 2 tins of lentils, spices, 2 onions, 2 tins of chopped tomatoes with 1 slice medium cut wholemeal bread. Side: rocket salad with seasoning and half a lemon's juice <i>Tip - Use tinned lentils, freeze any leftover bread</i>	Lunch - Cost: £1.15 pp Smokin' chilli 'non' carne soup (4 people) Butternut squash, brown rice, 2 tins of mixed beans in water, 2 tins of chopped tomatoes, wholegrain tortilla Side: roast cauliflower <i>Tip - Use tinned beans and frozen vegetables.</i>
Dinner - Cost: £1.18 pp Barbecue-style chicken drumstick (4 people) 1kg chicken drumsticks, 600g potatoes, 6 tbsp rapeseed oil, salt and pepper, barbecue sauce Side of coleslaw: 2 tbsp mayonnaise, 1/2 white cabbage, 2 carrots, 1/2 onion <i>Tip - Try to batch cook the drumsticks so you won't need to use the oven again for them</i>	Dinner - Cost: £1.26 pp Beef tacos (4 people) 500g beef mince, taco shells, 1 onion, 1 large pepper, 2 tbsp seasoning, 400g tin of red kidney beans in water Side: mixed leaf salad with tomatoes and olives <i>Tip - Swap the beef mince for any other mince (if you find pork or turkey mince on offer)</i>	Dinner - Cost: £1.16 pp Creamy chicken and rice (4 people) 200g cooked skinless leftover chicken, 250g long grain rice, 300ml double cream, 1 onion, 50g cheddar cheese, broccoli & cauliflower florets Side: garlic green beans, 1 lemon <i>Tip - Add more vegetables to bulk up the dish, use frozen vegetables</i>	Dinner - Cost: £1.20 pp One pan pasta Bolognese (4 people) 500g whole wheat spaghetti, 2 tins of sardines, cherry tomatoes, 2 carrots Side: mixed leaf salad with peppers and olives <i>Tip - You can buy any other whole wheat pasta, add more frozen mix vegetables, grated carrots or a tin of tomatoes</i>
Snack - Cost: £0.13 pp Small handful of unsalted peanuts 80g peanuts	Snack - Cost: £0.16 pp Carrot sticks with cream cheese 75g carrots, 30g cream cheese	Snack - Cost: £0.43 pp Two satsumas (or easy-peelers)	Snack - Cost: £0.89 pp Peaches in cream 2 peaches, 1 tbsp of honey, 100ml double cream
Total cost for the day: £2.89 pp	Total cost for the day: £3.44 pp	Total cost for the day: £2.95 pp	Total cost for the day: £3.85 pp



FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Breakfast - Cost: £0.31 pp Porridge 30g uncooked oats, 250ml whole milk <i>Tip - Add some pumpkin seeds or chai seeds if you have budget, to help you feel fuller for longer.</i>	Breakfast - Cost: £0.47 pp Poached egg 1 egg, 50g of cooked mushrooms, 150g baked beans with one slice of wholemeal bread <i>Tip - Use non branded, larger tinned baked beans, freeze any leftover bread</i>	Breakfast - Cost: £0.49 pp Fried egg 1 egg on 1 slice of a medium cut wholemeal toast with 10g veg oil-based spread and 80g sliced tomato <i>Tip - Bulk buy eggs, freeze any leftover bread</i>
Lunch - Cost: £2.27 pp Lasagne bake (4 people) Wholemeal lasagne sheets, 250g pork sausages, 2 tbsp rapeseed oil, 2 tins chopped tomatoes, spinach, ricotta, parmesan Side: mixed leaf salad with peppers and olives <i>Tip - Buy frozen spinach and use vegetable oil (rapeseed oil), 1 tsp/person/dish</i>	Lunch - Cost: £1.40 pp Soya chilli chicken and veg (4 people) 500g roast chicken, 250g wholegrain rice, 115ml gravy, 1 broccoli, 2 carrots and green beans Side: rocket salad with seasoning and half a lemon's juice <i>Tip - Use frozen vegetables including broccoli and green beans.</i>	Lunch - Cost: £1.87 pp Chicken & vegetable tray bake (4 people) 500g chicken breasts, 2 red peppers, 1 tin of tomatoes, fresh tomatoes, 500g baby potatoes Side: rocket salad, half a lemon's juice, garlic green beans <i>Tip - Choose your largest oven tray so that everything fits easily and cooks even. Add any frozen veg including broccoli and green beans.</i>
Dinner - Cost: £1.29 pp Fish and potato wedges (4 people) 500g white fish fillets, 500g baking potatoes, petits pois, 2 lemons. Side of coleslaw: 2 tbsp mayonnaise, 1/2 white cabbage, 2 carrots, 1/2 onion <i>Tip- Buy frozen fish filets and peas</i>	Dinner - Cost: £1.49 pp Green baked eggs (4 people) 320g peas, 1 broccoli, 2 spring onions, 1 tin of butter beans, 200g spinach, 4 eggs Side: mixed leaf salad with tomatoes, olives, onions <i>Tip - Use frozen green peas and spinach, tinned or frozen beans, bulk buy olives in tin/jar</i>	Dinner - Cost: £1.46 pp Arrabiata pasta (4 people) 500g whole-wheat pasta, 2 tins of chopped tomatoes, 1 courgette, garlic, salt, pepper, parmesan cheese Side: mixed leaf salad with olives, cucumber, onions <i>Tip - Bulk buy any non-branded wholemeal pasta, bulk buy olives in tin/jar</i>
Snack - Cost: £0.47 pp Smoothie 200ml whole milk and 80g frozen berries	Snack - Cost: £0.40 pp Handful of plain almonds 80g almonds	Snack - Cost: £0.14 pp Apple
Total cost for the day: £4.34 pp	Total cost for the day: £3.76 pp	Total cost for the day: £3.96 pp

Additional healthy snack options

2-4 large broccoli florets
£0.14 pp



2 kiwis
£0.60 pp



1 rye crisp bread with avocado
£0.37 pp



1 hardboiled egg with small salad
£0.72 pp



2 celery stalks and 2 tbsp yoghurt
£0.30 pp



80g home roasted soy beans
£0.38 pp



Raspberry smoothie (or another frozen fruit)
£0.47 pp



80g olives
£0.11 pp



80g cucumber sticks and 3 tbsp hummus
£0.47 pp



Apple and 2 tsp peanut butter
£0.28 pp

