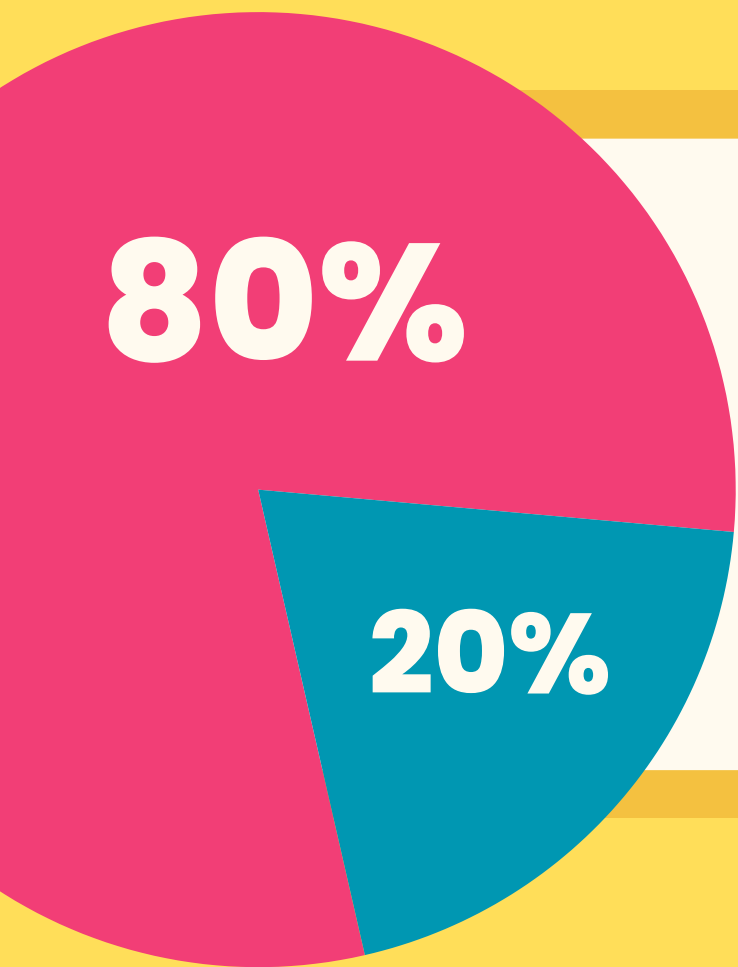


THE 80/20 DIET PLAN



**SOMETHING
YOU CAN
STICK TO**

BY GINGER VIEIRA



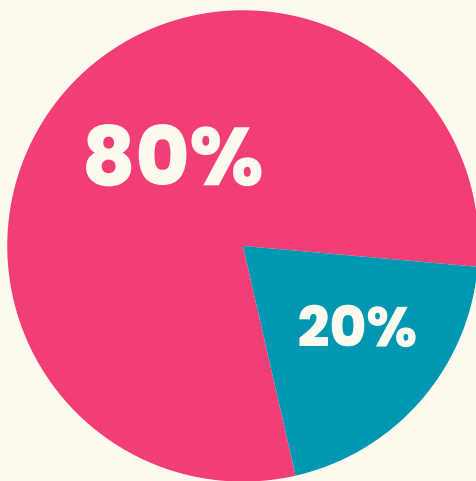
BY GINGER VIEIRA
GINGERVIEIRA.COM

CREATING YOUR 80/20 DIET

This approach to nutrition is about realistic balance with room for those not-so-perfect choices, too. Why? Well, we know that most of us don't exactly do well with that all-or-nothing restrictive diet.

Wanna try something more realistic? More sustainable for the rest of your life? Here's a look at my approach to an 80/20 diet helps me thrive with diabetes.

WHAT IS AN 80/20 DIET?



In an 80/20 diet, you aim to choose mostly high-quality, nutritious whole foods for 80% of your meals.

The other 20% allows for more indulgent snacks — like pizza, ice cream, or your favorite cookies! This flexibility offers a long-term sustainable approach to eating a healthy diet without feeling too restricted or deprived! Balance, baby!

It gives you room each day to be flexible and free from the constant pressure to be perfect.

HOW MANY STRICT DIETS HAVE YOU TRIED?

Chances are: you've already tried your share of strict diets. It can be hard to break away from the idea that you're only a "good diabetic" if you're following a restrictive diet.

But I want to ask you: how often does that super strict diet lead you to binge for days or weeks on all the food you were trying to avoid? Then you start another strict diet again a few weeks later, and the cycle continues!



WHICH FOODS COUNT FOR THAT 80%?

MORE PLANTS! (SURE! EVEN THE ONES WITH CARBS!)



IT CAN BE SIMPLE!

- **Nutritious whole foods are minimally processed – or not processed at all!** Fruits, veggies, legumes, and nuts are easy examples, but how do you make a meal out of them? Okay, you might include some processed bread, a tortilla wrap, or even salad dressing. But the core of your meal is whole foods.
- **Meanwhile, there are also processed foods like peanut butter or cheese that are minimally processed.** Well, the peanuts had to be ground up to make peanut butter, but that is a whole food for the most part. The cheese had to be made, but it is simply cheese.
- **Perfection isn't the goal!** It's not the end of the world if you include a bit of a processed ingredient in your beautiful salad! The goal is for 80% of your meals to be *mostly* high-quality and wholesome.
- **Ginger's confession:** I use Skippy or Jiff peanut butter! Super processed, but I don't care. I'm tired of the all-natural stuff and it helps me enjoy my daily Honeycrisp apple. For me, it counts in my 80%. It's mostly peanuts. See what I mean: you're not trying to be totally *perfect*. It's okay...

EXAMPLES OF MEALS & SNACKS

Snacks or small meals

- strawberries + cashews
- apple + cheese slices or PB
- raw veggies + hummus or guacamole
- blueberries + parmesan Whisps
- beans + diced veggies + dressing
- protein smoothie: Orgain Simple protein powder frozen strawberries + PB + unsweetened almost milk
- turkey + cheese slices dipped in mustard
- tofu + rice + cucumber + dressing
- mixed greens + raw veggies + walnuts + salad dressing

PLANTS! CHOOSE MORE PLANTS.

Larger Meals

- sauteed veggies + protein
- big salad + protein + salad dressing
- meatballs + black bean pasta + veggies
- chicken sausage + broccoli + sauce
- 2-3 eggs + avocado + fruit
- cold bean + feta + cabbage slaw salad
- chicken wings + raw veggies + dip
- hamburger + bun + salad
- salmon caesar salad
- taco salad

Condiments?

Who can live without condiments? Just be aware of how much you're using. Go easy on the dressing or the dips. Be thoughtful!

START EVERY MEAL OR SNACK WITH VEGETABLES!

NEED RECIPES?

JUST SEARCH
"EASY HEALTHY
VEGETARIAN SIDES"
ON GOOGLE — THEN
ADD SOME PROTEIN!

KEEP IT SIMPLE.

- **Grab that bag of baby carrots!** Dip them in something like hummus or salad dressing, just be thoughtful about how much dip you're consuming.
- **Make a giant simple salad** by ripping up a head of romaine lettuce and chopping up a bell pepper, add some pre-shredded carrots. Voila! Vegetables! Then add some dressing.
- **Slice up a bell pepper and a cucumber.** It takes two seconds! Dip it in your fave hummus or ranch. Is the ranch dressing perfect? Nope, but it's delivering your veggies!
- **Swap the rice and the pasta for a big veggie medley.** It's actually pretty darn easy: just choose 3 vegetables, slice them up, add a bit of water, cover and steam on medium heat until tender, remove the lid, add a smidge of oil, saute...then add some salt and herbs! Put your protein and sauce on top.
- **Dip those celery sticks in buffalo sauce and ranch dressing!** The goal isn't perfection. The goal is to eat more plants, and more real food. Sometimes that means *thoughtfully* including those not-so-perfect condiments.



QUICK & EASY SALAD

NO CHOPPING!



OKAY, NOW FOR THAT 20%...



- **What's the food you'd miss the most on that all-too-perfect diet?** Salty and crunchy chips? Pizza? Cookies or ice cream? French fries or bread with lots of butter? Cake?
- **That 20% of your diet is to satiate that craving thoughtfully.**
- **When you give yourself permission** to indulge carefully every day (or every other day or once a week), you're giving those foods less power! You're enjoying them without going totally crazy. Then you start fresh the next day on your 80%.
- **The time of day is up to you!**
 - If you eat "that something yummy" too early, will you crave more of it all day long?
 - Think about the best time of day for that 20% meal to ensure it doesn't interrupt your day. Instead, adds to it.
 - Enjoy it! It could be hard to actually give yourself permission to eat this vs. desperately trying to avoid it all the time.
- **You might overdo it at first.** If you're used to binge-eating this food after restricting, you might eat too much. It's okay! Take a deep breath and try again tomorrow carefully.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR BLOOD SUGAR?

Well, yeah, you have diabetes. But that doesn't mean you have to eat a perfect diet 100% of the time. It also means when you eat one of those more indulgent foods, you'll have to work harder to manage your blood sugar and insulin, too.

Trial and error: Count the carbs, take your insulin, and check your blood sugar a few times in the 4-hour window after eating. High? You need to create a new experiment with more insulin!

Not using insulin? If you can only manage your blood sugar by eating a super restrictive diet, this likely means you need support from medications, like insulin or a GLP-1.

Why is it worth it? Remember, this is about creating an approach to nutrition that you can sustain long-term!



GINGER'S TYPICAL DAY

- **6 AM:** Walk my dogs 2-3 miles
- **NO BREAKFAST:** I practice intermittent fasting!
- I fast most days until 1 or 2 pm. I eat most of my calories between 1 pm and bedtime.
- **7-8:30 AM:** Get kids to school & run 3 miles OR jump rope 30-45 minutes + light weights
- **9AM:** Work + 1 cup of black coffee + water
- **1 PM:** Walk my dogs 2 miles
- **2 PM: PLANTS + FATS** like big salad or apple + peanut butter or strawberries + hummus + veggies or deli ham + cheese + romaine lettuce
- **3 PM:** raw veggies + ranch for dipping
- **6 PM:** Most nights, I choose one protein (chicken, turkey sausage, pork chops, etc.) to cook in the air-fryer. Sometimes I add a dry rub (even the ones with sugar in them) and usually hot sauce or honey mustard. Then I sautee 3 veggies: like onion + cabbage + yellow bell pepper.
- **8 PM:** Whatever the heck I want! Usually cookies (sometimes from a box, sometimes homemade) or milk chocolate or chips or dry junk cereal.

AND THEN SOMETIMES...



YES: I drink alcohol. I try to limit my alcohol consumption to 2 nights per week, but I'll admit that's much harder in the summer! I LOVE making coin-style margaritas with fresh strawberries and salt!

YES: I go to restaurants. Restaurants definitely factor into my 80/20 plan. If I know I'm going to a restaurant where I'll likely be making a very wholesome choice, I don't change much about my day. If I know the restaurant will include gluten-free pizza or really amazing Vermont hipster tacos, I'll eat a little lighter during the day and probably skip the second small meal at 3 p.m.

YES: I have "cheat" days. I don't really plan them but there's usually one day on the weekend when I might eat a big gluten-free bagel smothered in cream cheese. I might snack on candy with my 7-year-old that day at 11 am! I just let the rules go and I indulge a bit. Usually, it leaves me eager to get back to my routine on Monday!



YEAH, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IS A BIG PART OF THIS!



YES: You need to get moving. If you aren't already exercising every single day, this is a must. It's time to make this a priority right now.

YES: Start walking every single day! Walking is like the fountain of youth. Get walking, my friends!

YES: It's time to ditch the excuses. We all have reasons we could use to say we simply don't have time. Make the time. Stop scrolling on your phone (or scroll while you're on a treadmill). Exercise while you watch your favorite show. Get your kids involved (monkey see, monkey do). Make it happen!

WANT MORE EXERCISE TIPS?

BUY MY BOOK: Exercise with Type 1 Diabetes

GET MORE SUPPORT FROM GINGER

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- [Books on Amazon](#)
- [YouTube.com/@DiabetesNerd](https://www.youtube.com/@DiabetesNerd)
- [Instagram.com/GingerVieira.T1D](https://www.instagram.com/GingerVieira.T1D)
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- **Honey Health App: Ginger's T1D Diary**

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