



6. Lucky Star canned fish and diabetes.

Diabetes is a condition in which the glucose in the blood is higher than normal. Glucose is a type of sugar that comes from foods containing carbohydrates, and is transported through the blood to all tissues and organs to be used for energy.

Under normal circumstances, glucose is transported with the help of the hormone insulin, which is produced by the pancreas. If the pancreas does not produce enough insulin or is unable to use insulin properly, glucose may build up to unhealthy levels in the bloodstream. When the blood glucose rises above a certain level, diabetes is diagnosed.

Diabetes is always serious. If it is left untreated or is not well managed, the high levels of blood glucose associated with diabetes can slowly damage both the fine nerves and the small and large blood vessels in the body, resulting in a variety of complications. These include heart disease, blindness, amputation, kidney disease and erectile dysfunction or impotence.

The risk of these complications can be greatly reduced by keeping blood glucose levels within the target range. Along with exercise and medication, nutrition is important for good diabetes control. By eating well-balanced meals in the correct amounts, you can keep your blood glucose level as close to normal as possible. The sensible health approach should be to be aware of the fat content and as part of your balanced diet, it is good to know that the carbohydrate content of meat and fish is minimal, and therefore these foods have a low GI value with minimal effect on blood glucose levels. However, since meat is a main source of saturated fat, oily fish such as Lucky Star Pilchards is a healthier option. Lucky Star is endorsed by Diabetes South Africa, which means that it complies with health specifications and is nutritious for healthy and diabetic persons.

General guidelines for diabetics:

- Limit your fat intake.
- Include a food from each of the food groups at each meal.
- If you are overweight, eat smaller portions and reduce your intake of fat. Limit the amount of alcohol you drink.
- Control your weight.
- Choose a nutritious diet from a variety of foods.
- Cut back on salt.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Visit a dietician to work out a diet plan suitable to your own particular lifestyle.

