

 Vanderbilt University Medical Center  
**DIABETES NUTRITION CLINIC**

A NOTE ABOUT CARB COUNTING AND.....

### SUGAR ALCOHOLS

Sugar alcohols are often used to sweeten diet or sugar free foods because they have half the calories of sugar. For example, sugar has 4 calories per gram and sugar alcohols have 2 calories per gram.

Sugar alcohols are absorbed slowly and less completely than sugar so they have a smaller effect on blood sugar. If you consume large amounts of these sugar alcohols it can add up and affect your blood sugar and your calorie intake.

The following are some names of sugar alcohols:

- Sorbitol
- Xylitol
- Mannitol
- Malitol
- Isomalt

### How Do They Affect Carb Counting?

Since sugar alcohol doesn't raise blood glucose as much as other carbohydrates in order to carb count a food that has sugar alcohol:

- 1- Subtract half of the sugar alcohol grams from the total carbohydrate
- 2- Count the remaining grams

For Example:

**Serving Size:** 4 cookies

**Total carbohydrate:** 35 grams

**Sugar alcohol:** 6 grams

Four cookies count as 32 grams carbohydrate ( $35 - 3 = 32$ )