

Blood Glucose 101: Part Two

Do I have to give up foods with carbohydrates?

Definitely not. Even if you wanted to, you could not avoid all carbohydrate because you would have nothing to eat other than pure animal protein and fat. Even broccoli, spinach and peanuts contain carbohydrates.

To live healthfully and to prevent the complications of diabetes, you need fruits, vegetables, whole grains and other foods with carbohydrates.

The key is to learn how much carbohydrate to have at each meal and snack. A registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) can help you with that. Visit the website of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (eatright.org) to find one in your area.

How often can I have something with real sugar?

Real sugar is not taboo. As long as it fits into your meal plan and you do not exceed the total amount of carbohydrate that is your goal for each meal or snack, you can have real sugar.

Just be sure that it's not pushing the healthful foods like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains off your plate and out of your diet. Some people will be able to eat a balanced diet and enjoy small amounts of real sugar – say a teaspoon of sugar or honey in coffee or tea – every day. Others will need to limit sugary treats to just a couple times each week.

What makes blood glucose too low?



Low blood glucose is called hypoglycemia, and it occurs when your blood glucose falls below 70 mg/dl.

Many things can cause hypoglycemia, including...

- Skipping a planned meal or snack or eating too little carbohydrate
- Exercising more than usual
- Drinking alcohol, especially if you do not eat carbohydrate-containing foods at the same time
- Taking too much diabetes medication

Ask your healthcare provider how to treat blood glucose lower than 70 mg/dl.

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