



Avoiding Diabetes and Hypoglycemia

If you have a family history of diabetes, a personal history of giving birth to a very large baby, struggle with hypoglycemic episodes, or if you've been diagnosed with Gestational Diabetes, there's a lot you can do to support your health and the health of your growing baby, and to avoid complications during your pregnancy, labor and birth. In addition to exercising regularly (a daily walk, swimming a couple times a week, yoga, etc.....), try to implement as many of the dietary changes listed below as possible. Do not think of yourself as being on a diet and do not try to be perfect. Just focus on making healthy choices as often as you can, and congratulate yourself every day for doing a good job nurturing yourself and your baby.

Eat 3 meals and 3 snacks daily

Space snacks so that you go no more than 3 hours without eating (except when you are sleeping at night). Always eat breakfast, focusing on protein foods (cereal, bagels, pancakes, etc. are not great choices). Spread your carbohydrates throughout the day, and always eat some protein with your carbohydrates as this helps your body to process the carbs and keep your blood sugar stable (such as cottage cheese with fruit, or bread with peanut butter). Eat a late afternoon snack, including protein, and a bedtime snack including protein. This will help you sleep and also help to keep your blood sugar more normal during the night. Protein-rich food suggestions can be found on the reverse of this page.

Omit Simple Sugars and Processed Carbohydrates

Avoid adding sugar (white sugar, brown sugar, or honey) to foods. Avoid soda, lemonade and other fruit juices. Instead eat whole pieces of fruit (for example, an apple instead of applesauce or apple juice), which provides fiber and bulk, and limit your fruit to 2 pieces a day. Avoid ice cream, pudding and sweetened yogurt. Eat desserts very rarely. Eat starchy carbohydrates rarely, as they impact your body in the same way that sugar does (for food and sweetener suggestions, see the reverse of this page).

Avoid pretzels, popcorn, bread sticks, crackers, and foods fried in oil, such as doughnuts, chips and French fries. These foods are either high in fat, and/or high in processed carbohydrates and provide little, if any nutritional value to you and your baby.

General Dietary Recommendations

- Choose foods high in fiber: sprouted and whole grains, vegetables and fruits, and beans and legumes.
- Eat lots of leafy green vegetables. These are packed with vitamins and minerals and have a positive impact on your blood sugar. Emphasize veggies that grow **above** the ground (root vegetables are much higher in carbohydrates).
- Choose olive oil and even a little butter instead of margarine, which contains trans fatty acids.

What to Eat & What Not to Eat

Protein-Rich Foods (nuts, seeds & hard-boiled eggs are easy snacks to carry with you)

Eggs Amaranth grain Nuts and nut butters (esp. almonds and peanuts)
 Wheat germ Cottage cheese Tofu Lean meats
 Fish (choose low-mercury fish such as wild salmon and tilapia) Pumpkin seeds
 Spirulina or "Super Green Food" supplements

Sweeteners

If you want to sweeten foods, use either Stevia or Xylitol, which add sweetness but do not affect blood sugar levels adversely. They can be used in cooking and baking, to sweeten beverages, and in most ways traditional sweeteners are used. Note that it may not take as much of these sweeteners to reach your desired level of sweetness, so start light and experiment.

Low Glycemic (Low Impact) Carbohydrates

These foods are packed with vitamins, nutrients, fiber, and are very colorful. They have a minimal effect on your blood sugar, and have been shown to improve cholesterol, HDL and blood sugar, along with helping to prevent cancer (they are antioxidants). Eat them liberally:

Alfalfa sprouts	Cucumbers	Okra	Arugula	Dill pickles
Olives	Asparagus	Eggplant	Parsley	Bamboo Shoots
Endive	Fennel	Bean Sprouts	Bell Peppers	Watercress
Scallions	Radishes	Cabbage	Kale	Spinach
Cauliflower	Kohlrabi	Lettuce	Celery	Turnips
Chicory	Mushrooms	Summer squashes		Swiss Chard
Beans (green snap or wax)		Greens (collard, turnip, beet, mustard)		

High Glycemic or High Impact Carbohydrates

The following should be eaten minimally. Avoid the foods in the left column and try foods from the right column instead. One or two servings a day meets basic energy needs. These foods raise your blood sugar. Choose small portions and always include protein when you eat them:

Very High GI	Lower GI: Choose instead
Bread (whole meal or white)	Sprouted whole grain bread
Potatoes	Whole grain pasta and legumes
Breakfast cereal	Unrefined whole grain cereals like oats or triticale
White rice	Quinoa or brown rice
Tropical fruits like bananas and pineapple (very high in sugar)	Temperate climate fruits like apples and plums
Cooked Carrots, Yams, Sweet Potatoes, Corn (starchy veggies all high in sugar)	Beans and Peas (starchy veggies lower in sugar which also provide fiber and nutrients)