

10 SIMPLE STEPS

TO HELP MANAGE YOUR BLOOD SUGAR AND
REDUCE YOUR NEED FOR DIABETES MEDICATIONS



SUMTOL

BALANCED NUTRITION FOR BETTER HEALTH

Ten Simple Steps to Help Manage Your Blood Sugar And Reduce Your Need For Diabetes Medications

Managing your blood sugar can be hard especially if it means counting calories and eating food you don't like. Sometimes getting started is the hardest thing of all. Making some small changes can put you on the path to controlling your blood sugar without turning your world upside down. Below are 10 simple strategies you can use to help you start managing your blood sugar, and possibly lead to reducing your need for diabetes medication. Start the new year off right and put yourself on a path to controlling your blood sugar once and for all!



- 1** Start your day with a serving of low fat protein. Starting your day with low fat protein keeps you from getting hungry before lunch and sets your metabolism to burn slow and steady throughout the day.
- 2** Choose whole grain breads over white breads and limit your intake to one slice. The draw to whole grain breads over white breads is the fiber. Fiber foods are processed by your body more slowly and so can keep your blood sugar from spiking. White bread does not have much fiber and so will tend to spike your blood sugar. Fiber also acts like a cleaning brush through your intestines and when your intestines are clear, you absorb more of the nutrients from your food, and reduce your risk for things like colon cancer.
- 3** Have fruit or fruit juice as a mid-morning snack instead of first thing in the morning, and add some nuts for a healthy fat. Having fruit or fruit juice alone first thing in the morning can give your body a sugar jolt and result in spiking sugars. Also, because fruit juices are basically sugar water, you burn those calories quickly and will be hungry sooner. Spiking your blood sugar repeatedly throughout the day is not good for good blood sugar control.

4 Eat high sugar fruits like bananas, oranges, grapes, or mangoes, or higher carbohydrate meals containing rice, pasta, or bread in the middle of the day instead of in the morning or at night. High sugar fruits have lower fiber content, so the energy you get from them burns quickly. Eating them in the morning spikes your blood sugar and makes you hungry faster and more frequently throughout the day. Eating them at night spikes your blood sugar by making your body think it is starving because it burned what you ate quickly and not it has to get through the entire night without any additional food—this causes your liver to panic and release sugar reserves into your blood, which can result in higher blood sugar readings first thing in the morning.

5 Take a short 5-10 minute walk about 15 minutes after you eat. Walking, or any form of exercise after eating helps move your food through your body for better digestion and can keep your blood sugar from spiking. Our muscles need fuel to move, so moving after you eat clears that sugar (fuel) from the blood and sends it to the muscles.

6 Drink water throughout the day instead of soda, sweetened beverages, or energy drinks. Our bodies are made of mostly water. Our bodies are constantly losing water through processes like evaporation (like when it is really hot outside), urination (no explanation needed for this one), and perspiration (when we sweat to cool our bodies down). Putting that water back is critical for our bodies to function properly. When we drink fluids that are flavored or have other things added to them (like sugar, caffeine, salt, color additives, etc.) our bodies get more than just water. These additional substances can spike blood sugar or blood pressure and cause other chemical imbalances in your body that over time can make your body run like a beat up Chevy



rather than a well tuned Porsche.

7 Use limited amounts (1 tsp/serving) of any natural sugar (e.g., cane, beet, or coconut sugar, or honey) instead of artificial sweeteners. Using real sugar always beats artificial sweeteners. This is because artificial sweeteners trick your brain into thinking you got energy when in fact you do not get any energy from them. What this ends up doing is making your body hungrier, so you may think you are doing yourself a favor by not using sugar, but you will end up eating more calories overall because of continued hunger.

8 Eat three distinct meals, each within 20-30 minutes, instead of grazing throughout the day and add two small (quick) high fiber snacks between meals. Our bodies like routine and will adjust our metabolism to fit our eating patterns. So, if you eat throughout the day, your body thinks food is plentiful and expects that it will keep coming. Your hunger will return faster and you will keep eating way beyond what your body needs to function. Starving yourself has the same outcome but through a different process. When your body goes long stretches without food, it will think that food is scarce and so it needs to conserve whatever food it gets so that it can continue to function. That's right, your body will store more of what you eat as fat for later use. That means that your liver will try to keep things going by breaking down stored sugar first which will spike your blood sugar. Eating three meals within a reasonable amount of time lets your body know how to budget the calories to last until the next meal. The high fiber snacks help to keep your blood sugar steady between meals. Just an added bonus in case your days are really long and your meals are spread out too far.



9 Balance each meal with approximately 50% complex carbohydrates, 30% unsaturated fat, and 20% low fat protein. Our bodies need quick fuel that helps us move, think, and simply function. But we also need slower burning fuels to get us through longer stretches of activity, and provide additional building blocks to keep our bones and muscles strong and all of our body systems working. Carbohydrates provide quick energy, like if you needed to sprint down the road or think hard while studying. Fats and proteins are slower forms of energy. They also have other purposes, they provide the foundation for our body structure and function. The key is to only eat as much as you need, otherwise, regardless of what you eat, it will get stored as fat. The 50-30-20 rule is a general rule for how much of each type of fuel your body needs to stay functioning efficiently. Now balance is one thing, but how much you eat makes a big difference too, so the trick is to balance what you eat, while making sure you only eat as much as you need.

10 End your day with a serving of low fat protein. Ending your day with some low fat protein is like filling your reserve tank so that you can get through the night. Protein burns slow and steady and will last throughout the night as you sleep, preventing your liver from breaking down stored sugar and flooding your blood with it because it thinks your body is starving.

Living in a way that will help your body process the food you eat can help you keep your blood sugar controlled and may even help you reduce or eliminate the need for medications.

These 10 simple steps will start you on your way. If you want to learn more about what you can do to manage your blood sugar, make sure you provide your email address below so that we can send you quality information to help you stay healthy.

