



My blood sugars are high and I'm pregnant...what am I going to eat????

You probably had many questions about what to eat when you first found out your blood sugars were high.

You may have asked yourself, “Do I need to limit my calories?” “Do I need to stop eating rice and pasta?” “Can I have fruit and juice?”

What do I really need to know and am I going to be able to manage this??

The following TIPS should be helpful for you to manage your blood sugars until you can be seen in our Pregnancy Diabetes Clinic.

1. This is not a weight loss diet so you do **not** need to count calories.
2. We recommend **eating more often** including 3 meals and 3 snacks each day.
3. Having **lots of protein rich foods** and **foods high in fiber** will significantly improve blood sugars.
4. You can eat **all you want of protein rich foods and vegetables that are not sweet.**
 - Protein foods: meat, fish, eggs, cheese, nuts, seeds, tofu, unsweetened peanut or nut butters. Legumes (dried beans, lentils, dried peas) contain both protein and starch. See below under starchy foods.
 - Vegetables that are not sweet: lettuce, cucumber, broccoli, fresh tomatoes, cauliflower, asparagus, celery, mushrooms, eggplant, peppers, green beans, cabbage, zucchini, spinach.
5. Foods that contain **carbohydrates need to be eaten in measured amounts.**
 - Starchy foods include cereal, whole-wheat pasta, brown rice, basmati rice or converted/parboiled white rice, potatoes, legumes like dried beans, lentils, peas, chickpeas and hummus; suggested portions: 1 cup cooked pasta, rice or legumes, 3-4 small nugget potatoes, ½ cup cereal with no more than 5 grams of sugar per ½ cup serving, e.g. Nature's Path Flax Plus or hot cereal like Red River.

- Bread can be eaten if it is high in fiber (at least 3 grams of fiber per slice) like stone ground whole wheat, heavy mixed grain and pumpernickel. Suggested portions: 1 slice of bread at breakfast if no cereal, 2 slices at lunch or supper, if no other starchy foods. Silver Hills Squirrely bread or Dempsters Pro Cardio bread is a good choice.
 - Only have 1 chapati or flat bread per meal. Do not put potatoes in your dahl (East Indian curry).
 - At breakfast or snacks limit milk to ½ cup and at lunch and supper you can have 1 cup of milk. Milk is naturally sweet due to the lactose content. Plain soy milk has about half the sugar compared to cow's milk. Choose a yogurt that is less sweet. You can have yogurt in place of a milk serving.
 - Enjoy up to 3 smaller portions of fruit at separate times through the day preferably with lunch and morning/afternoon snacks. Always have fruit with other food like cheese and crackers or a handful of nuts. Only one of your fruit choices each day can be ½ cup of pure unsweetened juice.
 - Sweet vegetables such as carrots, peas, beets, corn, yams, yellow squash, turnip and tomato sauce need to be limited to ½ cup per meal.
6. Fat is not usually restricted, however, avoid deep fried breaded foods and limit mayonnaise. If you are concerned about your weight gain, you can choose leaner cuts of meat, low fat cheese and milk and use added fats sparingly. Make your own salad dressings such as: oil and vinegar, lemon juice and oil or plain yogurt and herbs like dill.
 7. **Snacks are very important** as they allow you to have sufficient food so you do not feel hungry. Snacks help you control your portions at meals and cravings for sweets. Suggestions for snacks: peanut butter and toast, diet yogurt and fruit or raw vegetables with hummus.
 8. If you like to bake, reduce the amount of sugar to half of what the recipe calls for. You can then continue to enjoy cookies, loaves, crisps, and muffins. Splenda is a good sugar substitute for baking. You can make the recipe higher in fiber by using flours such as whole wheat or whole grain, adding oat bran, ground flax seed or chopped nuts. An occasional treat like a few (3) dark chocolate covered almonds can really help with a sweet craving.
 9. Equal (Nutrasweet) and Splenda (Sucralose) can be used in pregnancy, just limit your servings to 3 products per day. Avoid Sweet N'Low, Sugar Twin and Stevia.
 10. When you eat out at a restaurant, your best choice would be meat or fish and vegetables. If you choose a vegetarian meal and have lentils or beans as well as rice or potato, avoid having bread. Blood sugars will be better if you walk after a restaurant meal.
 11. **Exercise can really help** control blood sugars so stay active if you are able. A half hour walk can significantly improve your blood sugar levels.

Remember to arrange an appointment to visit our Pregnancy Diabetes Clinic at Victoria General Hospital. Our registered dietitian and nurse will see you to provide individual counseling. A diabetes specialist (Endocrinologist) may also see you, if needed.

To arrange an appointment at the Pregnancy Diabetes Clinic call: (250) 727-4266