

Tips for Managing Blood Sugar Levels In Gestational Diabetes

If you have gestational diabetes (GDM), it is important to manage your blood sugar during your pregnancy. A blood sugar level within the ranges below will decrease problems for you and your baby. Eighty to ninety percent of women can manage their blood sugar with lifestyle changes.

TIME OF DAY	BLOOD SUGAR GOALS IN MILLIGRAMS PER DECILITER (mg/dL)
Before eating	Less than 95 mg/dL
1 hour after a meal	Less than 140 mg/dL
2 hours after a meal	Less than 120 mg/dL

Ways to help manage blood sugar

• Increase fiber

Try whole grains, beans, vegetables, and fruits. These foods help slow digestion.

Limit your intake of the following foods

- Refined grains (such as cereal, white bread, bagels, or muffins).
- Sweetened drinks (such as juice, soda, sports drinks, or flavored milk).
- Sweet foods (such as doughnuts, candy, cookies, or cake).
- Added sugar (such as jelly, maple syrup, sugar, or honey).
- Limit fruit to 1-3 servings per day.
Examples of 1 serving: 1 medium apple, 1 small banana, or 1 cup of berries.
- Limit carbohydrates at breakfast to 15-45 grams. This is the hardest time of the day to manage your blood sugar.
- Drink only 8 ounces of milk at a time.
- Eat at least 175 grams of carbohydrate per day. This will support your baby's brain development and your own energy needs.

- Eat carbohydrates with lean proteins and healthy fats.
- Space your carbohydrates throughout the day.
- Eat 3 meals and 2-4 snacks per day. Do not skip meals.
- Try to eat at the same time each day.
- Enjoy a range of foods. This will help you enjoy your meals. It will also help your baby to like lots of foods in the future.
- Limit artificial sweetener intake.
 - Do not use saccharin (Sweet n' Low). It enters the placenta and may not be safe during pregnancy.
- Increase water intake. Try for at least 64 ounces of water per day.
- Exercise for 30 minutes per day on most days. This is best after meals.
- Check your blood sugar at home.

Even with lifestyle changes, you may need medication by the end of your pregnancy. Talk with your doctor and dietitian about your blood sugar levels. They will help decide if medication as needed.