

Diabetes

Life Lines



February–March 2008

Regular Blood Glucose Checks Help You Manage Diabetes

An important part of your medical care plan is checking your blood glucose on a regular basis. The more you check your blood glucose at home, the better you'll understand how you react to different foods, activities, or stresses.



Checking your blood glucose before a meal tells you how well you (and your medication) are doing in a relative fasting state. A value that is too high may mean that you need more medication or less food. A value that is too low may mean you need less medication or more food.

Checking your blood glucose after a meal tells you how your body is responding to that combination of foods and medication, if you are taking medication. Some people react with higher blood glucose values to certain foods like pizza or spaghetti than we would expect based on the amount of carbohydrate. Knowing how you react helps you plan your medication schedule and how much or even what other foods you may eat.

Checking your blood glucose at 2 or 3 A.M. tells you if you are having low blood glucose at night. If you do, this may mean your medication should be reduced or you may need a bedtime snack. Having a very high early morning blood glucose may mean that you didn't have enough bedtime medication, or that your blood glucose fell and your liver tried to compensate by making more glucose itself.

Because of all these possibilities it is important to keep a record of your blood glucose readings and share them with your health care team. They can help you look at patterns and adjust your diet or medication to help keep your blood glucose at your goal value.

To get this newsletter by mail, contact your local U of I Extension office.

Written by
Karen Chapman Novakofski
Associate Professor of Nutrition

www.extension.uiuc.edu



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
EXTENSION

Enjoying an Occasional Drink

Having an alcoholic drink will not affect your blood glucose if you...

- Normally have your blood glucose in good control
- Don't have complications often associated with diabetes, like high blood pressure or heart disease
- Have the drink close to or with a meal

Drinking alcohol on an empty stomach is not a good idea. Alcohol on an empty stomach can make your blood glucose fall too low (hypoglycemia). To avoid hypoglycemia when having an occasional alcoholic drink . . .

- Always eat something when you drink alcohol
- Check your blood glucose often, even before, during, and after having a drink. Although the effect can be very soon after having alcohol, blood glucose may fall for as long as 8 to 12 hours after you've had a drink. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans stress that, to be healthy, alcohol should be moderate: 2 drinks per day for men and 1 drink per day for women. A drink equals 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine, or 1.5 ounces of liquor.
- The calories and carbohydrates in alcoholic drinks do count, so work them into your meal plan and don't just "add them on."

Let's Get Flexible!

Flexibility is important. It's something we take for granted until we don't have it anymore. As we age, developing flexibility will make us more comfortable doing the activities of daily living.

For instance, practicing flexibility exercises for the neck can make it much easier to turn and look over your shoulder when driving. Flexibility of the leg and back muscles will make it easier to put on shoes and socks.

Staying flexible helps to decrease the likelihood of hurting yourself when you need to move quickly or to move something heavier than normal. Flexibility also helps with everyday movements such as walking, standing up from a sitting position, and reaching for items in cabinets.

Ask your health care provider for flexibility exercises at your next visit!



Medication Update

When people talk about insulin, they usually think shots and pain. But, insulin can be your best friend, keeping your blood glucose within your target range and thereby avoiding or delaying complications like blindness, kidney failure and the need for dialysis, heart disease or stroke, nerve damage and difficulty walking, and possibly the need for amputations.



Try these tips for making the injections more comfortable:

- Use insulin that is at room temperature, not refrigerator temperature.
- Make sure the air bubbles are out of the syringe before you inject; flick the syringe gently to get the bubbles to the tip and expel some insulin if necessary.
- Try to relax your muscles at the injection site.
- Use sharp needles or try a finer gauge.
- Don't start and stop when you are injecting; have a smooth delivery that is quick but not jabbing.
- Don't change the angle of the needle as it enters and leaves the skin; this makes the injection site larger than it needs to be.

Recipe Corner

Pecan Crusted Broccoli

Makes 6 1-cup servings

¼ cup pecan chips chopped
1 tablespoon olive oil
½ teaspoon marjoram
1 tablespoon dry bread crumbs
1 pound frozen broccoli, cooked

Directions

1. Sauté pecans in olive oil in small skillet for 2 to 3 minutes.
2. Add bread crumbs and marjoram, stirring frequently. Remove from heat when toasted.
3. Toss cooked broccoli with pecan mixture.

Total preparation and cooking time: 20 minutes

Per serving: 84 calories; 3 grams protein; 0 grams cholesterol; 2 grams fiber; 6 grams fat;
64% calories from fat; 4 grams carbohydrate; 26 mg. sodium

Carbohydrate Units: 0

Exchanges: 1 vegetable, 1 fat

Italian Baked Cod

Makes 4 servings

¾ cup chopped onion	1 teaspoon minced garlic
1 tablespoon olive oil	1 tablespoon sliced black olives
1 teaspoon basil	1 can (28 oz.) diced tomatoes
12 oz. cod fillets	

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 450°.
2. Sauté onions and garlic in oil. Add tomatoes, olives, basil. Simmer until thickened, about 10 minutes.
3. Place in non-stick baking dish. Top with cod fillets.
4. Bake covered about 10 minutes or until fish flakes easily.

Total preparation and cooking time: 30 minutes

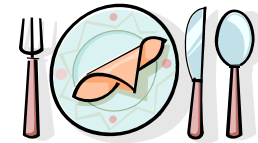
Per serving: 153 calories; 17 grams protein; 37 grams cholesterol; 4 grams fiber; 4 grams fat;
25% calories from fat; 12 grams carbohydrate; 144 mg. Sodium

Carbohydrate Units: 1

Exchanges: 2 vegetable; 2 low-fat meat

In the Kitchen: Menu Ideas

Visit www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/diabetesrecipes/ for recipes in menu .



Breakfast

Wheat flakes cereal with 1% milk

Hard boiled egg

Almond cranberry muffin*

Orange

Breakfast Total: 531 kcal, 80 gm carbohydrate; 5 carb units

Total Amount/Portion

1 cup cereal, 2/3 cup milk

1 egg

1 muffin

1 orange

Lunch

Tuna salad sandwich

Cream of asparagus soup, prepared with milk with unsalted crackers

Low-fat potato crisps*

Pink/red grapefruit

Lunch Total: 591 kcal, 80 gm carbohydrate; 5 carb units

Total Amount/Portion

1/2 sandwich

1 cup soup, 4 crackers

1 serving

1 grapefruit

Dinner

Southwestern casserole*

Lettuce salad with tomatoes and carrots with fat-free French dressing

Cranberry raspberry juice

Dinner Total: 681 kcal, 85 gm carbohydrate; 6 carb units

Total Amount/Portion

1 serving

1-1/4 cup salad, 2 tbsp dressing

8 fl. oz.

Total for the Day: 1803 kcal, 173 gm carbohydrates, 16 carb units



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
EXTENSION

College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences

Inside . . .

Regular Glucose Checks Help
You Manage Diabetes

Enjoying an Occasional Drink

Let's Get Flexible

Medication Update

Recipes and Menu Ideas