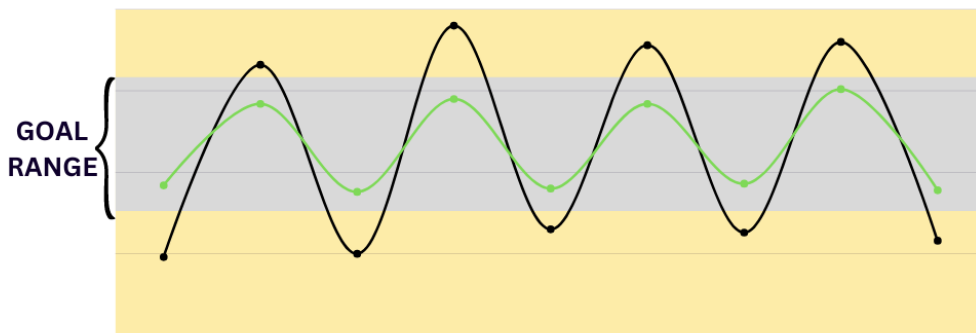


How to manage

# Gestational Diabetes Mellitus

with food

## 24 hr Blood Glucose



**Minimizing spikes and dips is essential!**



**You hold the key**  
You can manage your blood sugar by eating a certain way for the remainder of your pregnancy.

**The goal of a GDM care plan is to stabilize your blood sugar as much as possible.**

Avoiding spikes and dips in your blood sugar is the key to a healthy pregnancy. Taking regular readings and keeping track of them is the only way to know if it's stable. Keeping a food diary is the best way to identify problem foods, because every person is unique in the way the body responds to food. Spikes and dips increase risk to your baby, so it's very important to learn what you can do to minimize those. Four things affect your blood glucose levels. The good news is that three of them are under your control.

**1**

### HORMONES

**These are constantly changing, and out of your control.**

**2**

### HOW OFTEN YOU EAT

**Eating regularly and often is best.**

**3**

### HOW MUCH YOU EAT

**Smaller meals are better than large ones.**

**4**

### WHAT YOU EAT

**This is the most important thing you can control.**

## What you eat

What you choose to eat matters more than anything else

Sugar and carbohydrates have the most impact on blood sugar, so it crucial to avoid sugar and simple carbohydrates. You may think that a low-carb diet is the answer, but carbohydrates are your body's main source of energy, and complex carbohydrates are packed with important nutrients, so instead of avoiding them, you need to learn how to eat them, and what kinds to eat.

## Carbohydrates: Simple vs. Complex

It's very important to understand that carbohydrates are not all the same. Simple carbs are broken down by your body very quickly, which is why they cause spikes, and they don't offer much nutrition. Complex carbohydrates break down more slowly, and offer more than just energy. When you pair them with more fiber, fat, and/or protein, it causes them to break down even more slowly, and that's how you maintain a more stable blood sugar.

### Simple Carbs

white bread  
white pasta  
white rice  
cookies  
cake  
pastries  
donuts  
nabs  
crackers  
sugar  
potato chips  
biscuits  
tortillas  
French fries  
candy  
soda  
fruit juice  
sports drinks

### Complex Carbs

whole grain bread  
whole grain pasta  
whole grain crackers  
chickpea pasta  
hummus  
bean dip  
whole grain tortillas  
brown rice  
starchy vegetables  
legumes/pulses  
most fruit  
oatmeal  
quinoa  
barley  
buckwheat  
farro  
bran cereal

## FOOD PAIRING *Math*

**COMPLEX CARB**  
**FIBER, PROTEIN AND/OR FAT**  
**= LOWER BLOOD SUGAR  
RESPONSE**

## LEGUMES? PULSES? WHAT IS THAT!?

- Beans (pinto, kidney, navy, black, white, cannellini, lima, black-eyed peas, etc.) - have a bowl of them as an entrée or side, add them to recipes such as casseroles, stir fry or salad, make them into a dip
- Chickpeas - toss them on a salad instead of croutons, use hummus for veggie dip or sandwich spread, roast for a snack
- Lentils - enjoy lentil soup as an entrée or side, add them to spaghetti sauce, casserole, or salad



# How to fill your plate

## Non-starchy Veggies

Fresh, frozen or canned vegetables, such as broccoli, carrots, greens, zucchini, eggplant, green beans, cauliflower, lettuce, tomato, cucumber, peppers, onions, etc. Be mindful of how much sodium (salt) is in canned foods. Low or no salt varieties are often available.

## Whole grains, Legumes, & Starchy Vegetables

Whole grain bread, whole grain pasta, brown, black, red or wild rice, beans, lentils, chickpeas, potatoes, corn, parsnips, peas, butternut squash, acorn squash, taro and yams

## Protein

Meat, legumes, tofu, eggs, cheese, nuts/nut butter

## Fruit

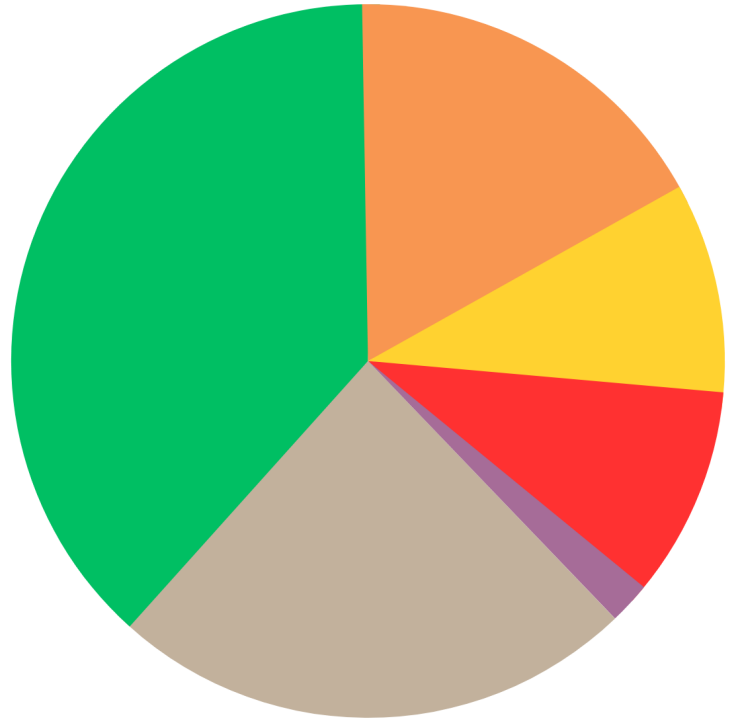
All types of fresh, frozen or canned fruit (with no added sugar)

## Dairy

Animal milk (1% or skim), nut milk (unsweetened), soy milk, yogurt (no sugar added)

## Healthy Fats

Olive, canola, and safflower oil. *Avoid lard, butter, shortening, and saturated fat (check labels).*



## Tips for success

- ◆ Get lots of fiber, because it helps regulate your blood sugar (and your bowels). Try to get some in every meal. Check labels and choose foods with the most.
- ◆ Drink plenty of water, since how hydrated you are can affect your blood sugar; this is an easy way to keep your energy up as well.
- ◆ Take a daily walk. As long as your doctor says it's okay, a walk can help keep your blood sugar in check.

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# Cheat Sheet

## MONITOR

- ▶ Keep a food diary so you and your care provider can identify problem foods
- ▶ Take glucose readings an hour after meals and record your numbers
- ▶ Pay attention to glucose spikes and omit or eat less of problem foods

## AVOID

- ▶ Sugar is a huge spiker - sweet foods, drinks and candy put your baby at risk
- ▶ White bread, white pasta, white rice cause spikes because they are simple carbs
- ▶ Bodies respond differently to foods; avoid anything that cause spikes for you

## SWAP

- ▶ Switch from white varieties of bread, pasta, and rice to whole grain varieties
- ▶ Instead of fried foods, have air-fried, grilled or roasted
- ▶ Change your 2 or 3 meal a day routine to smaller, more frequent meals

## PAIR

- ▶ Pair complex carbohydrates with protein, healthy fat and fiber to reduce spikes
- ▶ If a food raises your glucose, eat less of it next time, and pair with more protein, healthy fat and/or fiber to see if you tolerate it better - this will not work with foods you should be avoiding

## REMEMBER

- ▶ Eating fiber-rich foods, like legumes, whole grains and veggies helps avoid spikes and dips
- ▶ Taking walks and staying hydrated also helps keep your blood glucose in check
- ▶ You may want to consider making these changes permanent for better health