



5 Natural Ways to Balance Your Blood Sugar

January 18, 2017 | 2 Comments | 2

I wanted to follow up on last week's blog post, which offered some tips on how to cut down on your sugar consumption. In an ideal world, you would cut processed sugars *completely* out of your diet. But, believing in baby steps, let's focus on simply *decreasing* the amount of sugar you consume.

As you might already know, prolonged glucose spikes can lead to a host of health issues like insulin resistance, diabetes, blindness and heart disease. Just as "sugar highs" are not good for our health, neither are "sugar lows", which bring with them fatigue, shakiness and irritability. And so it is important to maintain balanced glucose levels at all times.

Bottom line is, we not only *feel* better when our blood sugar is balanced, we can reduce inflammation, balance our hormones, avoid sugar cravings and lose that stubborn weight!

Here are some natural and effective ways you can balance your blood sugar:

1. Eat Plenty of Healthy Fats

Beyond eating healthy like sweet potatoes and brown rice, it's important to accompany them with a quality source of fat. Why? Because fat slows down the absorption of glucose into the bloodstream so you don't get those sudden spikes

and crashes. Plus, fat makes us feel fuller longer so we don't feel like snacking in between meals.

Which fats are good and which are not so good? Avoid any fats that are made in a factory including corn oil, soybean oil, safflower oil and margarine, as these are all highly processed and lead to chronic inflammation.

Good fats are the ones our ancestors ate for thousands of years, namely fats from animals like butter, eggs, lard and tallow. For vegetarians and vegans, avocado and coconut oil are other excellent options.

And, though you may be thinking these fats will clog your arteries, relax. We were all duped. [These fats are good for us](#). But you wanna know what WILL clog your arteries? Blood sugar problems!

2. Eat More Protein

While quality fat slows down the absorption of glucose into the blood stream, protein actually helps get sugar into the cells so your body can use it for energy. This is why it is so important to balance your macronutrients at each meal as they all work together and serve a purpose. The carbs provide the glucose, the fat helps it be absorbed at just the right pace, and the protein gets it where it needs to be to do its job.

So, it's important to consume a healthy source of protein at each meal. Lean meats, preferably grass-fed, are a great source. Vegetarians can relax knowing they can also get the right amount of proteins through vegetables like spinach, kale, broccoli, and mushrooms.

3. Reach for Fruit

Most of us have a sweet tooth, but some of us make really bad choices when it comes to feeding that craving. [Fruits](#) are an excellent way to feed your need for something sweet while providing your body with a quality carbohydrate.

"But isn't fruit loaded with *fructose*?" you may be asking? Well, yes, fruit (some fruits more than others) does have a significant amount of fructose, which makes it sweet and delicious.

The difference with fruit is, it is also an excellent source of fiber, and all of that fiber protects you from a sugar spike. While a piece of fruit may contain, let's say, 75g of sugar, the fiber concentration makes that drop to, say, 25 grams of sugar. This is why a diabetic will not get the same glucose reading after eating a banana as they do after eating a cookie, even though both desserts are high in sugar. Fiber is your friend for many reasons!

Having said this, do not drink fruit juices, as all of the fiber has been taken away so you're left with a glass of sugar. A tall glass of orange juice is not necessarily a

healthier choice than a glass of coke. Though the OJ does provide some vitamin C, it is still loaded with sugar that will cause your blood glucose to spike. In fact, often when a diabetic has low blood sugar, they or their loved one rush to get them a glass of orange juice, to get their glucose up quickly.

4. Exercise

Exercise is one of the best ways to manage blood glucose levels. Exercise makes your cells use insulin more efficiently and can help keep your blood sugar in a healthy range. It also helps your cells take in that sugar.

If you have already been diagnosed as a diabetic and are currently on diabetes medications, speak with your doctor before starting any exercise program. Working out while on these medications can send your levels too low, causing hypoglycemia.

5. Use a Blood Glucose Monitor

While we can somewhat tell what our blood sugar is doing by taking note of how we feel (for example low blood sugar will make us shaky and cranky), it's a good idea to use a blood glucose monitor to accurately gauge how your body responds to the foods you eat.