



Why should you be testing your blood glucose?

Firstly we must support insulin (one of our master hormones) and understanding how your diet affects your blood glucose and insulin levels is imperative so that you can make the best choices for your health and body.

The hormone insulin is released when we eat food, when carbs/sugar is digested glucose flows into the blood stream and insulin hoovers it up to use for energy in your cells and muscles.

When we have good insulin health (this is described as being insulin sensitive) – glucose is easily burnt for energy and we function normally. Bad insulin health (insensitive to insulin) – can lead to excess blood glucose and ultimately central fat storage, otherwise known as the muffin top.

Who might want to consider testing blood glucose?

1. Diabetes runs in family
2. Anyone who has signs and symptoms listed below
3. Anyone who has a sensitivity to carbs (feel tired, lethargic, brain foggy after carb intake)

Let's understand diabetes

Type 1 diabetes

This is an autoimmune condition where your immune system attacks the beta cells in the pancreas that produce insulin. Pancreas then cannot produce insulin due to cell destruction, this usually starts in childhood, and will mean being insulin dependent (injections) and this is permanent typically.

Type 2 diabetes

Your pancreas is producing a lot of insulin but the cells are not able to react/listen clearly to the hormone signal, so the glucose stays in the blood

and the cells starve for glucose, they then signal more insulin and becomes a nasty cycle of insulin production. The cells can eventually stop responding completely and this leads to various health complications!

T2D is reversible with lifestyle and diet however the effectiveness will depend on the severity of the individual condition! It mostly occurs in adults but more and more we are now seeing it in children too due to an increase in childhood obesity.

If you plan to get tested for T2D then you need to get fasted insulin tested at the GP ideally to get the answers that you are looking for – if you have high fasting insulin you are pre diabetic.

Symptoms of erratic blood sugar

- Shaking
- Sweating
- Anxiety
- Dizziness
- Panic attacks
- Hunger
- Fast heartbeat
- Weakness
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Irritability.

What can you do?

Test your blood glucose with a home test kit – blood glucose monitor

Accucheck do a great one ~£30 and this should come with plenty of testing strips etc. Iphone monitors also exist now but replacements are expensive, so do a cost benefit analysis before investing.

How do I test?

Ideally test along the following guidelines for consistency:

1. First thing in the morning before any food (fasted blood glucose)
2. 1-hour post lunch
3. 2 hours post lunch
4. 3 hours post meal

We want the fasted (morning) reading to be below 5mmol/L. You will get a surge after eating, but we want to see it coming down to normal within 3 hours of eating. If your blood glucose is exceeding 7.8mmol/L, then this is a cause for concern and consult your GP!

Nutrition changes

Come off the processed foods, focus on QUALITY sources

1. Add more fat to your meals (slows down digestion of carbs)
2. Add more fibre (slows down digestion of carbs)
3. If you are struggling with simple carbs, stick to root veggies for your carbs
4. Slow cook, steam or boil foods (will have a lesser effect on blood sugar)
5. Eliminate caffeine (coke, dark chocolate, tea, green tea, coffee)
6. Cut down or eliminate liquid calories (sodas, milkshakes, coffees etc)
7. Eliminate alcohol

It is worth doing these in stages and retesting after each elimination to see how your body reacts

Exercise + Lifestyle

1. Walk 60-90mins/day – just start by moving more to increased demand for glucose in your muscle and body should start responding by mobilising your glucose
2. Interval training ~2x/week (tabata, sprints)

3. Lift weights – will deplete muscle glycogen, and drive glucose movement
4. Stand up more – increases insulin sensitivity
5. Manage stress – high cortisol and adrenaline disrupt insulin
6. Work on improving sleep
7. Have a 12 hour fast between dinner and breakfast and have longer gaps between meals.

Bonus bits

- Cinnamon (organic) helps to raise insulin sensitivity (add to porridge, eggs, smoothies, fruit salad, sweet potato, curry etc)
- Green tea – 30-40mins before meal
- Herbs and spices - antioxidants
- Magnesium – supports metabolism
- Chromium – supports metabolism (Higher nature/Solgar capsules)

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