



Reasons for Blood Sugar Swings

Upswing: Caffeine

Blood sugar can rise after drinking coffee, even black coffee with zero calories, thanks to the caffeine. Likewise, black tea, green tea, and energy drinks can hinder blood sugar control in people with diabetes. Each person reacts differently, so it's best to track your own responses to foods and activities.

Upswing: Sugar-Free Foods

Many foods labeled "sugar free" will raise your blood sugar level. Why? They can still have plenty of carbs from starches. Check the total carbohydrates on the back label before digging in.

Upswing: A Bad Cold

Your blood sugar rises as your body works to fight off an illness. Drink water and other fluids to stay hydrated. Call your health care provider if you've had diarrhea or vomiting for more than two hours or if you've been sick for two days and aren't getting better. Be aware that some medicines, such as antibiotics and the decongestants used to clear your sinuses, can affect your blood sugar.

Upswing: Job Stress

Feeling overwhelmed or unhappy at work takes a toll. When you're under stress, your body releases hormones that can cause your blood sugar to rise. This is more common for people with type 2 diabetes, than those with type 1 diabetes. Learn to relax with deep breathing and exercise. If possible, change the situation that is making you feel so much stress.

Lower: Household Chores

Cleaning the house or mowing the lawn can have an added bonus for people with diabetes: lower blood sugar. Many of the chores you do around the house count as moderate physical activity, with plenty of health benefits. Make a point of walking around the grocery aisles or parking farther from the entrance to the store. Small amounts of exercise add up.

Lower: Yogurt

Foods that contain healthy bacteria, such as many types of yogurt, are called "probiotic." They can improve digestion and also may help you control your blood sugar. Some yogurts contain added sugar and fruit, so be careful to count the carbs. Your best choice is plain yogurt or light yogurt without added sugar.

Roller coaster: Exercise

Physical activity is a terrific health booster for everyone. But people with diabetes should tailor it to their individual needs. When you work out hard enough to sweat and raise your heartbeat, your blood sugar may spike up, then drop. Intense or endurance type exercise can make your blood sugar drop for at least 24 hours afterward. Eating a snack before you begin may help. Check your blood sugar before, during, and after you exercise.

Roller coaster: Alcohol

Alcoholic drinks contain plenty of carbs, so at first they will raise your blood sugar. But for as long as 12 hours after drinking, your blood sugar may drop. If you drink, it's best to do so with food, and check your blood sugar. The American Diabetes Association advises no more than one drink a day for a woman and two drinks for a man.

Caution: Sleep

Blood sugar can dip dangerously low during sleep for some people with type 1 diabetes. It's best to check your blood sugar level at bedtime and when you wake up. A snack before bed may help. For some people, blood sugar can rise in the morning, even before eating, due to changes in hormones or a drop in insulin levels. Regular testing is important. One option is a continuous blood glucose monitor, which can alert you to highs and lows



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