

Managing Diabetes During Pregnancy

With careful planning and blood sugar management, most women with diabetes can enjoy a healthy pregnancy and a safe delivery.

Why Blood Sugar Control Matters

Keeping blood sugar within target range from conception through delivery is essential. Poor glucose control can lead to:

- **First Trimester Risks** – High blood sugar early in pregnancy increases the risk of miscarriage and birth defects.
- **Later Pregnancy Risks** – Uncontrolled blood sugar may cause fetal macrosomia (excessive birth weight), birth injuries, and a greater need for a C-section.
- **Neonatal Hypoglycemia** – A baby's pancreas may overproduce insulin in response to high maternal glucose levels, leading to low blood sugar after birth.
- **Higher Stillbirth Risk** – Extreme maternal hyperglycemia increases the chance of stillbirth.



Because of these risks, home births are not recommended for women with any form of diabetes. Experts suggest 3-6 months of stable blood sugar control before conception to minimize complications.

Blood Sugar Targets for Pregnancy

- **Fasting:** 95 mg/dL (whole blood) | 105 mg/dL (plasma-calibrated)
- **1-hour after meals:** 140 mg/dL (whole blood) | 155 mg/dL (plasma-calibrated)

Your doctor may provide personalized targets.

Smart Nutrition Strategies

Pregnancy requires 300 extra calories daily in the second and third trimesters. To balance blood sugar:

- **Eat every few hours** – Divide carbohydrate intake among three meals and 2-4 snacks.
- **Limit carbs at breakfast** – Some women tolerate only 30g of carbs in the morning due to hormone-driven glucose spikes.
- **Choose complex carbs** – Prioritize whole grains, dairy, and fruit while avoiding added sugars and juices.
- **Watch portion sizes** – Overeating carbs at once can lead to dangerous blood sugar spikes.

Weight Management and Diabetes

Excess weight increases the risk of:

- Type 2 diabetes
- Heart disease and stroke
- Sleep apnea and respiratory issues
- Certain cancers

Set small, realistic goals and focus on long-term health.

8 Tips for Healthy Weight Management

- Plan meals ahead to avoid impulsive eating.
- Use smaller plates to control portion sizes.
- Eat slowly and savor each bite.
- Choose lean proteins and high-fiber foods.
- Limit fast food and fried items.
- Exercise regularly – even walking helps!
- Keep healthy snacks on hand to curb cravings.
- Stay hydrated – drink 8-10 cups of water daily.



ADS Supports Your Journey

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Website: www.advanceddiabetessupply.com

Patient Support: 1-866-422-4866

Email: customer care@northcoastmed.com



US MED

Website: www.usmed.com

Patient Support: 1-877-840-8218

Email: customerservice@usmed.com