

- Carbohydrates / Body weight

How to have your cake and lose weight too – yes, really

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Do you get cravings when you aren't hungry? Are you finding it hard to lose weight? Do you have an energy crash at 11am or 3pm? Our bodies weren't designed to eat the high-sugar, highcarb processed modern diet, Inchauspé says. During digestion, all carbs turn to glucose, the body's main fuel. Glucose triggers the release of insulin, which stores any excess as fat. And a big input of glucose – a spike – leads to an insulin spike. Keep doing this day after day, and over time, you risk developing prediabetes, then diabetes, as well as other insulin-related conditions such as polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS).



Keeping glucose steady also helps iron out cravings for sugar and energy slumps. You don't change what you eat, only how.

1: Eat foods in the right order

Eat the veggies on your plate first, then protein and fat. And last, any starches and sugars, including fruit and pudding (luckily). A study from Cornell University showed that if you eat in this specific order, you reduce your glucose spike by 73 per cent.

The fibre in vegetables slows both the breakdown of the glucose in your food and gastric emptying. It also creates a viscous barrier in the small intestine that makes it harder for glucose to get into the bloodstream.

2: Add a green starter

Begin with a salad or any vegetable-based starter, raw or cooked: eg sliced carrot with hummus, sliced cucumber with guacamole, sliced tomato with one or two slices of mozzarella.

3: Eat a savoury breakfast

A study from Stanford University in California showed that when non-diabetics were given a breakfast of cornflakes, it sent their blood glucose to levels that looked prediabetic, some even diabetic.

Your best breakfast is a savoury one: fibre from vegetables or salad as well as protein, such as cheese, smoked fish, eggs, tofu, nuts, nut butter or Greek yoghurt, and optional carbs or fruit (eaten last).

4: Watch your snacking

It's better to eat larger, more filling meals instead of smaller ones, then snacking in between. Every time you have a snack, your insulin goes up. If you want something sweet, do it at the end of a meal, when it'll cause a smaller glucose spike.

And if you do snack, make it savoury eg: a spoonful of nut butter; a cup of 5 per cent Greek yoghurt with nut butter; a handful of baby carrots and a spoonful of hummus; a hunk of cheese; apple slices with cheese or nut butter; a hunk of cheese; a hard boiled egg.

5: Vinegar before you eat

Put a tablespoon of vinegar in a tall glass of water, and drink 20 minutes before to 20 minutes after eating. Apple cider is the most palatable.

The acetic acid in vinegar slows down the release of glucose into the blood and speeds the uptake of glucose in the muscles.

6: Put some clothes on your carbs

This is for those times when we're going to eat a slice of cake because we're hungry and it's there. Combine it with fat, protein or fibre to help reduce how much and how quickly glucose is absorbed by our bodies. Have the brownie with Greek yoghurt, choose the bagel with smoked salmon.

7: After you eat, move

Move within an hour after a meal and your muscles use up the glucose that's just been released into the bloodstream, flattening any potential spike. Studies have proven this with a 10- to 20-minute walk, weights and strength training, but any exercise is likely to be good. If you are worried about prediabetes or diabetes, see your GP, who can carry out simple blood tests to screen for any issues.

Source: NZ Herald online (abridged)