

What to Eat

Real food, in the amounts that keep blood sugar steady. Nothing here is complicated and nothing here is a diet — it is a list of things worth having in the house.

ONE

Never naked carbs.

Carbohydrate always arrives with fiber — beans, oats, whole fruit, intact grain. That is what flattens the rise.

TWO

Half the plate is vegetables.

Non-starchy ones. Fill that half first and the rest of the plate sorts itself out.

THREE

Carry glucose tablets.

One exception to everything else on this sheet. In your bag, your car, your nightstand.

BREAKFAST

- **Steel-cut oats** with ground flaxseed, berries and cinnamon
- **Overnight oats** — oats, soy milk, chia, grated apple
- **Tofu scramble** with turmeric, spinach, black beans, salsa
- **Savoury oats** with white beans, greens and a little mustard
- **Dense rye or sourdough toast** with smashed white beans and tomato
- **Buckwheat porridge** with walnuts and pear
- **Last night's soup.** Breakfast does not have to be breakfast food.

Watch: *fruit on its own rises faster than the same fruit stirred into oats. Pair it with something.*

LUNCH & DINNER

- **Lentil soup** with kale and barley
- **Three-bean chili** with tomatoes, corn and sweet potato
- **Dal** with brown rice and spinach
- **Stuffed sweet potato** with black beans, salsa and coriander
- **Grain bowl** — farro or brown rice, roasted vegetables, chickpeas, lemon-mustard dressing
- **Whole-grain pasta** with lentil bolognese and a large salad
- **Stir-fry** — tofu, broccoli, peppers, ginger, garlic over buckwheat noodles
- **Minestrone** with white beans and plenty of greens
- **Shepherd's pie** with lentils over mashed potato and cauliflower

SNACKS

- Hummus with cucumber, peppers, carrots
- Edamame, warm, with a little salt
- Roasted chickpeas — crunchy, keeps a week
- Apple with a few walnuts
- Berries with a spoon of pumpkin seeds
- Celery or endive with white bean dip
- Air-popped popcorn — a lot of volume for very little
- Rye crackers with avocado and lemon
- A small bowl of whatever soup is in the fridge

Keep one in your bag. *A missed meal is how most lows start.*

DRINKS

- Water, herbal tea, sparkling water with lemon
- **Unsweetened soy milk** — the one plant milk with real protein
- **Eat the fruit, skip the juice** — except when treating a low
- **Alcohol lowers blood sugar for hours afterwards**, and the low can arrive overnight. Never on an empty stomach, and tell your prescriber what you actually drink.

BEDTIME — if you take insulin or a sulfonylurea

The job of a bedtime snack is to carry you through the night, not to fill you up. Pair a slow carbohydrate with a little fat or protein.

- Small bowl of oatmeal with cinnamon
- Half an apple with a few almonds
- Rye crackers with hummus
- Small bowl of lentil soup
- Soy yoghurt with ground flaxseed and berries
- A handful of roasted chickpeas

Ask your prescriber *what your bedtime number should be before you decide whether you need this every night.*

THE PLATE, IF YOU WANT ONE RULE INSTEAD OF A RECIPE

Half non-starchy vegetables — greens, broccoli, peppers, cabbage, tomatoes. **A quarter** beans, lentils, peas or tofu. **A quarter** intact grains or starchy vegetables — brown rice, farro, barley, sweet potato. Build it in that order and you do not need to count anything.

Treating a Low, and Stocking the Kitchen

The first half of this page is the one place where whole food is the wrong tool. The second half is everything that makes the rest of the sheet easy.

LOW BLOOD SUGAR — THE EXCEPTION TO EVERY OTHER RULE HERE

When your blood sugar is below 70 mg/dL (3.9 mmol/L) you need sugar to reach your bloodstream fast. Fiber, fat and protein all slow absorption down — which is exactly what you want at every other moment of the day, and exactly what you do not want now. **Do not treat a low with whole food.**

15 grams of fast carbohydrate — pick one

- 4 glucose tablets (*the most reliable, and they do not tempt you to keep eating*)
- 4 oz / 120 ml fruit juice — orange, apple, grape
- 4 oz / 120 ml regular soda, not diet
- 2 tablespoons raisins
- 1 tablespoon sugar or maple syrup in a little water

Then: wait 15 minutes, test again, repeat if you are still under 70. Once you are back up, eat a real snack from this sheet — that is what stops it coming back. **If you take acarbose,** use glucose tablets specifically; juice and table sugar will not work fast enough.

What not to reach for

- Apple with nut butter — the fat slows it right down
- Chocolate, nuts, or a handful of trail mix
- A whole apple or orange with the skin and pith
- Anything you have to chew for a while

PANTRY

- Canned beans — black, white, chickpea, kidney
- Lentils, dried and canned. Red for speed, brown for soup
- Steel-cut and rolled oats
- Brown rice, farro, barley, buckwheat, whole-grain pasta
- Canned tomatoes, tomato paste
- Low-sodium vegetable broth
- Ground flaxseed, chia, walnuts, pumpkin seeds
- Nutritional yeast, tahini, mustard, cider vinegar
- Onions, garlic, sweet potatoes, squash

FREEZER

- Berries — for oats, all year, no waste
- Spinach and kale
- Edamame
- Peas and corn
- Cooked grains in portions
- A container of soup or chili, always

A full freezer is the difference between cooking and ordering on a bad evening.

IN YOUR BAG, YOUR CAR, YOUR NIGHTSTAND

- **Glucose tablets.** All three places. Check the dates.
- A small box of raisins
- Rye crackers or an oat bar without added syrup
- A handful of nuts (*a snack, not a low treatment*)
- Your meter or sensor, and a way to log a number

WHEN YOU WANT SOMETHING SWEET

- Baked apple or pear with cinnamon
- Frozen banana blended into soft-serve
- Dates with a walnut pressed inside — two, not the packet
- Berries with soy yoghurt and ground flaxseed
- A square of dark chocolate after a meal, not instead of one

After a meal rather than on an empty stomach makes a real difference to the curve.

IF YOU ONLY DO THREE THINGS THIS WEEK

Cook a pot of something on Sunday — lentil soup or chili — so there is always an answer in the fridge. **Put glucose tablets in three places** today. **Eat breakfast with oats and ground flaxseed** for a week and watch what the mid-morning number does. That is the whole first week. The rest can wait.