

10 Worst Foods That Spike Your Blood Sugar

We're going to talk about the 10 worst foods that spike your blood sugar, and surprisingly, some of them are supposed to be healthy foods.

We'll also look at some healthier alternatives and I'll answer some common questions at the end.

There are lots of different things that affect your blood sugar. You can do everything else right, but if you're eating the wrong foods, your blood sugar will go up and stay up.

Why Is Food So Important for Blood Sugar Control?

Foods like potatoes and rice and bread contain starch. Starch is made up of long chains of glucose (which is sugar) glued together one after another. Think of beads or pearls on a string.

When you eat these foods, the starch goes into your gut. Your body can't use the starch in this form because it's too

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big, so it starts breaking it down and pulling off the glucose.

Now these individual glucose units are small enough to pass through the wall of your gut and into your blood.

When you hear that you have high blood sugar, it means you have high levels of glucose in your blood. And where did the sugar come from? The food that you ate.

When your blood sugar — that's your blood glucose — rises above a certain level, your pancreas releases a hormone called **insulin**. Your body uses hormones to send messages around your body.

So, insulin travels to every part of your body through your blood and goes around knocking on doors, telling each of your cells:

"Look, this is dangerous. There's too much glucose in the blood. I need you to open up and take some so the levels can come down."

If you're healthy and everything is working normally, when insulin knocks, your cells listen. They open up, take

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some of that glucose (that sugar) out of your blood and into the cells, and your blood sugar comes down.

How Insulin Resistance Develops

As we keep on eating and eating, and as we're getting fatter over time, these cells become stuffed and uncomfortable.

You know the feeling when you've had so much to eat that just looking at food makes you feel like vomiting? Just like that.

Now when you eat, your blood glucose goes up. Insulin comes along and knocks on the doors telling your cells to open up and remove some of the sugar from your blood. And they're like, *"No, thank you. We're stuffed. We can't take any more."*

They refuse to open their doors, and the sugar stays in your blood — and your blood sugar stays high as a result.

This is **insulin resistance**.

If insulin knocks on the door, talks to your cells, and they listen and open up, that means your cells are **sensitive** to insulin.

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But if insulin knocks and the cells don't listen and don't open up, that means they've become **resistant**.

When your pancreas sees that your blood sugar is still high, it becomes hyperactive.

It produces and releases **more insulin** to try to overwhelm the cells and force them to open up and remove the sugar from your blood.

This works for a little while. But then the cells are so uncomfortable that they become stubborn again.

Your pancreas produces even more insulin.

And this cycle continues until your pancreas just can't produce enough insulin to force the cells to remove sugar from your blood.

And that is when your blood sugar starts to rise steadily.

Now you're left with high insulin resistance and high blood sugar.

Now you have **pre-diabetes**, and as your blood sugar gets even higher, you progress to full-blown **type 2 diabetes**.

Blood Sugar, Insulin Resistance, and Health Risks

When you have high insulin resistance and high blood sugar, you have a much higher chance of developing:

- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Blindness
- Cancer
- Memory loss as you get older

How Foods Affect Blood Sugar

There are two ways foods can affect your blood sugar:

1. **Immediate spike:** Some foods cause an immediate spike after eating, measurable with a glucose monitor.
2. **Long-term damage:** Some foods gradually cause insulin resistance, making blood sugar harder to control over time, even if you don't notice an immediate spike.

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The Worst Foods to Avoid for Blood Sugar

Low-Fat Foods

I know it sounds strange, but all these low-fat foods in boxes and cartons can raise your blood sugar.

How?

Fat makes food tasty.

When you take out all the fat from food, you get food that tastes like cardboard.

And the easiest way to make any food taste better? **Add sugar** to it.

Regular table sugar is made up of **glucose and fructose**.

- Glucose raises your blood sugar.
- Fructose is converted into fat by your liver and stored there.

Stored fat in your liver increases **insulin resistance**, eventually raising your blood sugar too.

You don't need to fear fat.

Eat healthy, natural fats found in:

- Eggs
- Full-fat yogurts

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- Meat
- Fish

When cooking, use natural fats like:

- Coconut oil
- Palm oil
- Lard
- Ghee
- Butter

These oils don't need heavy processing with chemicals.

Wheat Bread and Refined Grains

Many of us grew up eating bread, and it's one of the hardest habits to break when trying to lower blood sugar.

- **White bread** raises blood glucose faster than regular table sugar.
- **Wheat bread** is almost the same as white bread. It might have a bit more fiber and some added coloring to make it look more wholesome, but it spikes blood sugar too.

Better options (if you have good blood sugar control):

- Sprouted bread (like Ezekiel bread)
- Sourdough bread

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But if you're struggling with high blood sugar, it's best to avoid these altogether.

Breakfast Cereals

Eating breakfast cereals like:

- Cornflakes
- Rice Krispies
- Froot Loops
- Other packaged cereals

...is one of the worst ways to start your day.

They spike your blood sugar and leave you hungry two hours later.

What About Oatmeal?

Oatmeal is often called a "superfood," but:

- It's **carbohydrate-heavy** and low in protein.
- It can raise your blood sugar, especially flavored varieties with added sugars.

Steel-cut or rolled oats are slightly better because they release glucose more gradually.

Still, if you have trouble controlling blood sugar, it's better to avoid oatmeal too.

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Granola Bars and Protein Bars

Granola bars are marketed as healthy but:

- They often contain lots of oats (cheap filler) and dried fruit (concentrated sugar).
- They usually include preservatives, additives, and colorings.

Protein bars are not much better — packed with chemicals and sugars.

Both are poor choices if you want to control your blood sugar.

Sugary Drinks

When we think of sugary drinks that raise blood sugar, sodas like **Coke** and **Fanta** usually come to mind.

But many drinks marketed as healthy are also loaded with sugar, including:

- Energy drinks
- Sports drinks
- Some electrolyte drinks

Energy drinks often contain a mix of ingredients designed to give you a buzz, such as:

- Caffeine
- Sugar
- Guarana (another source of caffeine)

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- L-carnitine
- Taurine
- Ginseng

Some of these drinks are sold in large cans that may contain:

- Up to 20 teaspoons of sugar
- The caffeine equivalent of **five cups of coffee**

In addition to spiking blood sugar, they can cause:

- Memory problems
- Anxiety
- Panic attacks
- Sleep issues

Fruit Juice

Most people don't realize that drinking **fruit juice** is nearly the same as drinking a soft drink in terms of sugar content.

- A standard **12-ounce (350 ml)** can of soft drink contains about **10 teaspoons of sugar**
- The same size orange juice has about **9 teaspoons of sugar**

That's almost no difference.

Orange juice is just a soft drink in disguise, and many

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people drink it first thing in the morning thinking it's healthy.

Artificial and "Natural" Sweeteners

If sugar is bad, what about **diet drinks** and **sugar-free alternatives** like diet Coke or iced tea?

There are many sweeteners marketed as healthier options — but some are worse than sugar itself.

Natural Sweeteners

Examples:

- Agave syrup
- Coconut sugar
- Date sugar
- Honey

These all **raise your blood sugar**.

They may contain a few extra vitamins compared to table sugar, but they are still sugar.

Sugar Alcohols (Sweeteners Ending in "-ol")

Examples:

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- Maltitol
- Sorbitol
- Xylitol

These are often found in:

- Sugar-free foods
- Biscuits
- Protein bars
- Sugar-free yogurts

They **do** affect your blood sugar.

Maltitol causes the highest spike.

They can also cause **diarrhea** if consumed in large amounts.

Maltodextrin

Even though **maltodextrin** has no calories, it **raises blood sugar even faster than white sugar**.

Always check food labels to avoid it.

Best Sweeteners for Blood Sugar

Safer options include:

- Stevia
- Monk fruit
- Erythritol
- Allulose

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Vegetable Oils and Seed Oils

The term “vegetable oil” usually refers to **seed oils** — oils made from plants that don’t naturally produce a lot of oil.

Examples include:

- Canola oil
- Soybean oil
- Corn oil
- Sunflower oil

These oils are:

- Extracted using heat and chemicals
- **Unstable** and spoil easily

Once absorbed into the body, these oils become part of the membrane surrounding each of your cells.

There, they cause **inflammation**, leading to insulin resistance — which increases blood sugar over time.

[Fast Foods and Deep Frying](#)

Fast foods and restaurant-fried foods are typically cooked in these seed oils.

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Worse still, **deep frying oils are reused repeatedly**, becoming even more damaged and harmful.

You can't control what oil is used at restaurants, so the best option is to **avoid these foods altogether**.

Fake Plant-Based Foods

Many people assume that plant-based foods are automatically healthier.

But heavily processed plant-based foods like:

- Plant-based meat substitutes
- Vegan ice cream
- Plant milks

...can raise your blood sugar **more** than the original versions made with animal products.

Once a natural food is changed and put into a box or carton, you must read the labels.

Often, you're just eating a mix of **man-made chemicals** with **added sugars**.

If you're on a vegan diet and trying to control your blood sugar, avoid the fake foods.

Just eat natural, unprocessed plants instead.

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Alcohol and Blood Sugar

Worst Alcoholic Options

- **Mixers** (e.g., sugary cocktails) are basically **alcoholic soft drinks** and spike blood sugar immediately.
- **Beer** still contains carbohydrates and raises blood sugar despite being fermented.

Best Options for Blood Sugar

Spirits like **whiskey** and **vodka** do **not** raise blood sugar directly.

In fact, drinking them on an **empty stomach** can sometimes **drop** your blood sugar below normal levels.

But don't be fooled by short-term effects.

The Bigger Problem: Your Liver

Alcohol damages the **liver**, one of the **most important organs for blood sugar control**.

If you're serious about managing your blood sugar, it's best to **avoid alcohol altogether**.