

Pattern Management with Diabetes

You can use pattern management to help figure out what is affecting your blood sugar. Pattern management means writing down your blood sugar results from different times over many days and looking for “patterns” or “trends” of times when your blood sugar is high or low. You may also be able to download blood sugar results from your blood glucose meter to do this. Make notes on your blood sugar log about food, drinks, activity, stress, medication taken, and times you have not felt well. All of these things can affect your blood sugar.

Look at blood sugar results for these times:

- when you wake up
- before each meal
- after each meal
- before activity
- after activity
- at bedtime
- middle of the night (2 to 3 am)

Use the table below to compare your blood sugar results:

Test time	Goal Blood Sugar	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Wake up						
Before breakfast						
After breakfast						
Before lunch						
After lunch						
Before dinner						
After dinner						
Before exercise						
After exercise						
Bedtime						
Middle of night						
Other						

Look at the following chart to see if you can figure out the cause of high or low blood sugar levels. Discuss the best solution with your healthcare provider.

BSWH Diabetes Education 2020

Problem	Possible Cause	Possible Solution
High blood sugar at wake up or before breakfast (fasting blood sugar)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overeating at night • Weight gain • Not enough activity • Not enough diabetes medication or insulin • Low blood sugar overnight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow a meal plan • Increase activity • Ask doctor about medication changes • Check blood sugar in the middle of the night (2 am to 3 am)
High blood sugar after breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overeating • Not enough insulin at breakfast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow a meal plan • Ask about changing medication • Walk for 10 to 15 minutes after eating
Low blood sugar before lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under eating, delayed or missed meal • Too much diabetes medication or insulin in the morning • Increase in activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow a meal plan • Add a mid-morning snack • Ask about changing medication • Change the time of activity
Low blood sugar in the afternoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under eating, late or missed meal • Too much diabetes medication or insulin • Increase in activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow a meal plan • Ask about changing medication • Change the time of activity
High blood glucose in the afternoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overeating • Not enough diabetes medication or insulin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow meal plan • Ask doctor about medication changes • Walk for 10 to 15 minutes after eating
High blood glucose after evening meal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overeating • Not enough diabetes medication or insulin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow meal plan • Ask doctor about medication changes • Walk for 10 to 15 minutes after eating
Low blood glucose overnight (2-3 am)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too much diabetes medication or insulin at bedtime • Increase in activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask doctor about medication changes • Add a snack at bedtime if active at night • Check blood glucose more often