

# Eating Guidelines for Reactive Hypoglycemia

Reactive hypoglycemia is low blood glucose (sugar) that occurs within four hours after eating.

Symptoms of reactive hypoglycemia may include anxiety, fast heartbeat, irritability (feeling very stressed or nervous), shaking, sweating, hunger, dizziness, blurred vision, difficulty thinking and faintness.

Follow the tips below to help keep your blood glucose levels steady and prevent symptoms of hypoglycemia.



## Steps you can take

Eat small balanced meals or snacks throughout the day (about every three hours).

- 1 Choose a variety of healthy foods from at least three of the four food groups at each meal and two of the food groups at each snack. A meal of chili (Meat and Alternatives, Vegetables and Fruit) with cornbread (Grain products) and a glass of milk (Milk and Alternatives) contains all four food groups.
- 1 Limit foods and drinks high in sugar such as doughnuts, frozen desserts, fruit flavoured drinks and soft drinks.
- 1 Avoid long stretches of time between meals.

Choose foods that are high in soluble fibre and starchy foods that have a low glycemic index at each meal.

These types of foods can help keep blood glucose levels stable.

Foods high in soluble fibre include:

- 1 oatmeal, oat bran and barley

- | dried peas, beans and lentils
- | vegetables and fruits with their skin.

Aim for 5-10 grams of soluble fibre per day.

Starchy foods low in glycemic index include:

- | oats, converted/parboiled rice, barley and bulgur
- | breads made from stone ground flour and heavy mixed grain such as pumpernickel bread
- | dried beans, peas and lentils.

Most vegetables, fruits and low-fat milk products have a moderate or low glycemic index and can be included at each meal. Talk to a registered dietitian for help with choosing and adapting recipes to add low glycemic index foods in your meal plan.

If you drink alcohol, avoid mixing it with sugary drinks such as pop or juice and have it with food.

Alcohol should only be consumed in moderation. Moderate alcohol intake is: no more than two drinks per day or 10 drinks per week for women and no more than three drinks per day or 15 drinks per week for men. One drink is:

- | 341 mL (12 oz) bottle of 5% beer, cider or cooler
- | 142 mL (5 oz) glass of 12% wine
- | 43 mL (1.5 oz) shot of 40% spirits or ice wine due to its higher sugar content.



## Additional Resources

HealthLink BC. Visit [www.healthlinkbc.ca](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca) for medically approved nonemergency health information.

HealthLinkBC File #68h Fibre and Your Health

[www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthfiles/hfile68h.stm](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthfiles/hfile68h.stm)

Dietitian Services Fact Sheets available by mail, e-mail (call 8-1-1) or at [www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthyeating](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthyeating):

- Sample Menu for Reactive Hypoglycemia  
[www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthyeating/sample-menu-reactive-hypoglycemia.html](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthyeating/sample-menu-reactive-hypoglycemia.html)

Food Sources of Soluble Fibre

[www.dietitians.ca/Downloads/Factsheets/Food-Sources-of-Soluble-Fibre.aspx](http://www.dietitians.ca/Downloads/Factsheets/Food-Sources-of-Soluble-Fibre.aspx)

"Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide"

[www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide)

Canadian Diabetes Association's fact sheets "Glycemic Index" and "Beyond the Basics" [www.diabetes.ca](http://www.diabetes.ca)

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## Notes

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