



LET'S TALK ABOUT

BLOOD SUGAR

& GETTING IT BACK IN TO BALANCE

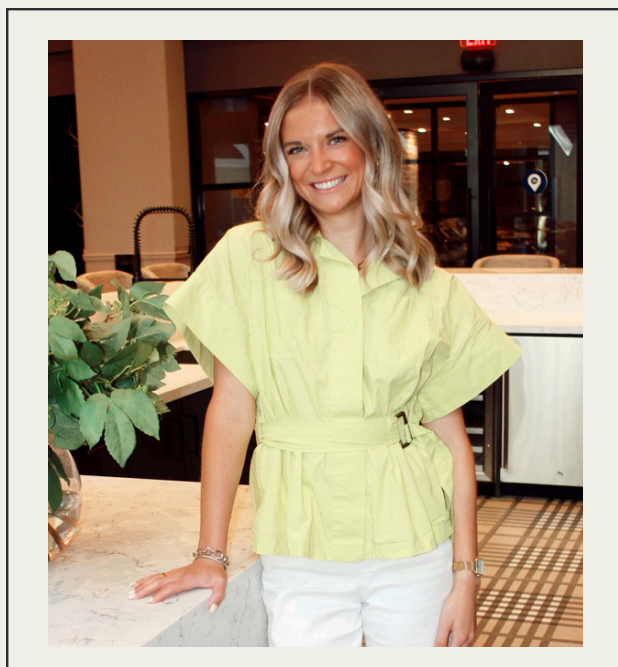
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MEET SYDNEY!



Sydney Morlan

Hi! I'm Sydney Morlan, a Certified Health and Wellness Coach (IIN). My partner, Julie, and I's goal at Holistic Nutrition Coaching is to help men and women heal from the inside-out to become the happiest, healthiest version of themselves. After losing my period for two years and fighting a five-year battle with an eating disorder, I was able to find food freedom, balance my hormones, and regain control of my life. Blood sugar balance was one of the key pillars that helped me heal from the inside-out. I am excited for your journey to find confidence and control of your body again.

CHAPTER I

BLOOD SUGAR 101

Glucose

Glucose, often referred to as blood sugar, is the powerhouse that fuels your body's daily activities.

Understanding the sources and types of carbohydrates that contribute to the amount of simple sugar moving through your body is crucial for maintaining optimal health. In this section, we'll delve into the basics of blood sugar, differentiating between simple and complex carbohydrates and exploring their impact on your overall well-being.

Types of Glucose

Glucose stands as the primary form of energy your body utilizes. As the simplest type of carbohydrate, it plays a pivotal role alongside fat and protein in supporting your body's fundamental functions. The food you consume provides the raw materials for glucose production, either through complex or simple carbohydrate sources.

Simple vs. Complex Carbohydrates

Simple Carbohydrates:

- White bread
- Rice
- Pasta
- Candy
- Soda
- Syrup
- Table sugar

These sources of simple carbohydrates are rapidly digested, leading to a swift spike in blood sugar levels. While they provide quick energy, the subsequent crash may leave you feeling fatigued and craving more sugary foods.

Complex Carbohydrates:

- Brown rice
- Oats
- Fruit
- Vegetables
- Whole grains

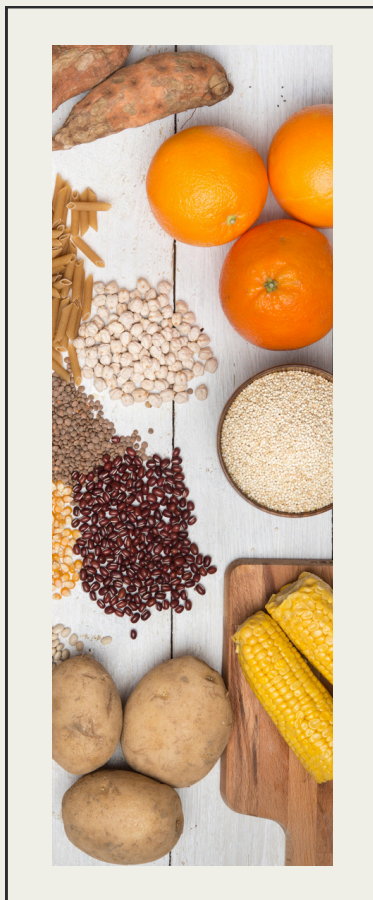
CHAPTER I

Complex carbohydrates contain more fiber and take longer to break down, resulting in a gradual release of glucose into the bloodstream. This sustained energy release helps maintain stable blood sugar levels, providing lasting fuel for your body.

Glucose's Vital Role in Your Body

Everything you eat undergoes a process of breaking down into glucose to fuel your body. Whether it's a simple carbohydrate like candy or a complex carbohydrate like brown rice, the end result is the same: glucose becomes available for your organs, muscles, and nervous system.

Glucose is indispensable for energy and supplies essential nutrients to your body's vital systems. Organs, muscles, and the nervous system all rely on glucose to function optimally. Without an adequate supply of glucose, your body's ability to perform its daily functions is compromised.



CHAPTER II

UNDERSTANDING INSULIN RESISTENCE

As you eat, your body promptly initiates a complex process to metabolize glucose and other carbohydrates. Enzymes, with the assistance of the pancreas, play a pivotal role in breaking down these nutrients, setting the stage for a crucial sequence of events in maintaining blood sugar balance.

The Pancreas Player

When carbohydrates are consumed, enzymes spring into action, breaking them down into glucose. The pancreas, a key player in this process, detects the surge in glucose levels and responds by releasing insulin—a hormone with a pivotal role in blood sugar regulation. Insulin acts as a signaling messenger, prompting cells in muscles, fat, and the liver to absorb glucose from the bloodstream, utilizing it either for immediate energy or for storage.

Insulin Resistance

Insulin resistance emerges when cells become less responsive to the insulin

signal. In this scenario, insulin, acting like a key, struggles to unlock the cells, leaving glucose stranded in the bloodstream. To compensate for this resistance, the pancreas increases insulin production in an attempt to lower elevated glucose levels.

Insulin resistance, if left unmanaged, sets off a chain reaction of adverse health effects. The combination of high glucose levels and excess insulin production contributes to various complications, including:

- **High Blood Pressure:** Elevated glucose levels and increased insulin can lead to hypertension.
- **Heightened Diabetes Risk:** Prolonged insulin resistance raises the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.
- **Increased Hunger:** The imbalance in glucose metabolism may trigger persistent feelings of hunger.
- **Weight Gain:** Excessive insulin can promote fat storage, potentially leading to unwanted weight gain.

CHAPTER III

BLOOD SUGAR

Blood sugar levels play a central role in your health, influencing your overall well-being. It's important to note that imbalances in blood sugar can affect individuals without a diagnosis of type 1 or type 2 diabetes. Understanding the signs of erratic blood sugar levels is key to proactive health management.

If you are experiencing symptoms such as anxiety, irritability, nervousness, excessive sweating, headaches, fatigue, or frequent sickness, your imbalanced blood sugar could be to blame.

The Importance of Blood Sugar Balance

Maintaining balanced blood sugar levels is not just about avoiding diabetes; it's a cornerstone of overall health. Here's why regulating blood sugar is crucial:



Inflammation

Inflammation is a natural defense mechanism, crucial for healing. However, chronic inflammation, often fueled by excessive sugar intake, is a root cause of various illnesses.

Oxidative Stress

Elevated blood sugar levels can lead to the production of damaging free radicals in blood vessels. Excessive free radical activity triggers oxidative stress, damaging cell function and contributing to inflammation. Oxidative stress is linked to heart disease, cancer, immune deficiencies, and other serious health conditions.

Gut Health

Sugar and refined carbohydrates can cause inflammation-boosting changes in the gut bacteria, leading to symptoms such as leaky gut, IBS, and other GI problems.

Energy Balance

Balanced blood sugar levels ensure a steady and reliable supply of energy to the body's cells and organs. This helps in preventing energy crashes and fatigue, promoting sustained vitality throughout the day.

Mood and Cognitive Function

Fluctuations in blood sugar levels can impact mood and cognitive function. Stable blood sugar contributes to better concentration, mood stability, and overall mental well-being.

Weight Management

Balanced blood sugar levels play a role in appetite regulation and satiety. Stable blood sugar helps control cravings and overeating, contributing to effective weight management.

CHAPTER IV

HOW TO BALANCE YOUR BLOOD SUGAR

Tip #1: Eat Blood Sugar Balancing Meals

A blood sugar-balancing meal is one that helps keep your blood sugar levels stable and provides a steady release of energy over time. It is combination of healthy carbohydrates, protein, and fiber.

Carbohydrate

We just learned that carbohydrates are the body's main source of energy, so you want to make sure you are fueling your body with the best fuel, not just the cheapest or most convenient. Opt for complex carbohydrates such as whole grains or starchy vegetables which are digested more slowly, preventing rapid spikes in blood sugar.

Protein

For your protein, focus on incorporating lean meats, poultry, fish, beans or tofu to help slow the digestion of carbohydrates.

Fat

Finally, be sure to incorporate health fats into each of your meals and snacks. Examples of health fats include avocado, nut butter, olive oil, nuts, and seeds.

Fiber

Finally, incorporating fiber-rich foods, like vegetables, legumes, and whole grains, further contributes to stable blood sugar. Fiber not only slows down the absorption of sugar but also promotes a feeling of fullness, reducing the likelihood of overeating.



Examples of Blood Sugar Balancing Meals:

Breakfast

- Carb: 2 slices of sourdough bread
- Protein: 2 eggs
- Fat: 1/2 avocado
- Fiber: Handful of berries



Lunch

- Carb: 1 small - medium sized roasted sweet potato
- Protein: 4oz grilled chicken breast
- Fat: 1/2 avocado
- Fiber: 1 serving brussel sprouts



Dinner

- Carb: 1 cup quinoa
- Protein: 1 Salmon Filet
- Fat: 1/2 avocado
- Fiber: Small salad with olive oil and balsamic vinegar & asparagus



Tip #2: Avoid Caffeine on an Empty Stomach

This was a HUGE factor in overcoming my digestive issues. For months, I struggled with constipation, diarrhea, gas, and bloating. I was confused because I was doing everything the internet told me to do. I was not drinking coffee; I was eating a ton of fiber, avoiding processed foods, exercising regularly, and getting 7-9 hours of sleep per night. Years ago, I made the switch from coffee to matcha. Now, I know matcha is

an acquired taste, but I love it. While I was not drinking coffee on an empty stomach, I was drinking matcha first thing in the morning on an empty stomach, which still contains a good amount of caffeine.

Caffeine naturally spikes our cortisol levels, the body's stress hormone. Our body's cortisol level naturally peaks when we wake up and declines throughout the day. For some, like me, my body had a hard time tolerating caffeine on an empty stomach in the morning when my cortisol was already at its peak, which led to digestive issues, anxiety, shakiness, brain fog, and other symptoms similar to those of having a blood sugar drop.

Now, I am not saying you have to give up your morning coffee or matcha. Try waiting two hours after you wake up and after you've eaten a blood-sugar balancing breakfast to consume your caffeine. This will allow your cortisol levels to come down slightly after waking, and you will be setting yourself up for success by eating a healthy, satisfying breakfast before enjoying the energy boosting caffeine.

Tip #3: Get 7-9 Hours of Sleep

I know you've heard it before, but I am going to say it again.

Quality sleep is a vital factor in maintaining balanced blood sugar levels and overall metabolic health! When we consistently get sufficient, restorative sleep, our bodies function optimally, and this includes the regulation of blood sugar. During deep sleep, the body undergoes crucial processes, such as hormone regulation and cellular repair, that directly impact blood sugar balance.

One key player in this relationship is the hormone cortisol, which plays a role in blood sugar regulation. Adequate sleep helps keep cortisol levels in check, preventing spikes that can lead to elevated blood sugar. Insufficient sleep can disrupt insulin sensitivity, making it more challenging for cells to respond effectively to insulin, which is critical for blood sugar uptake.

Lack of sleep is also associated with increased levels of the hunger hormone ghrelin, and decreased levels of the satiety hormone leptin, which can lead to poor food choices and overeating, which can impact blood sugar levels.

When I began to prioritize my sleep, I noticed significant changes in my mood, digestion, and energy. My WHOOP bracelet helps me plan my sleep each night. Take advantage of the tools and technology we have to enhance your own sleep schedule!

Tip #3: Savory > Sweet Snacking

In an ideal world, we would be eating three, large, blood sugar balancing meals per day to ensure our blood sugar has time in between meals to lower, instead of it being elevated all day long due to snacking all day long.

However, sometimes (many times) snacks are necessary! If you are going to snack, grab a savory snack. Try not to eat just a carbohydrate alone and instead pair it with a protein, fat, or fiber.

Example of blood sugar balancing snacks:

- Apple + Peanut/Almond Butter
- Greek Yogurt + Berries and Nuts
- Hummus + Vegetables
- Hard Boiled Eggs + Seed Crackers
- Edamame Beans
- Caprese Salad

Tip #4: Limit Alcohol Intake

Another tip people probably do not want to hear, but one that is extremely important especially for those trying to work through hormonal imbalances.

The liver is the largest internal organ in your body, and it is quite the powerhouse. The liver is responsible for metabolizing nutrients, detoxifying harmful substances, and producing essential proteins. It also regulates blood sugar levels, stores energy, and aids in digestion.

Normally, the liver is in charge of releasing glucose to maintain blood sugar levels. But when you drink, the liver is busy breaking the alcohol down and not regulating blood sugar levels, because it must prioritize metabolizing the alcohol due to its potential toxicity.

How to consume alcohol in a blood-sugar friendly way:

- EAT! Eat a large blood-sugar balancing meal before consuming alcohol.
- Drink in moderation.
- Be mindful of sugary mixers such as soda, fruity drinks, and juices.
- Avoid late-night drinking to lessen the poor effect of alcohol on your sleep.

Tip #5: Move Your Body

In addition to getting 30 minutes of physical exercise per day, also try to move your body for 10 minutes after meals. This aids your body in digestion and helps to flatten the glucose curve.

This can look like:

- Washing the dishes after a meal.
- Taking your dog on a walk.
- Watering the plants.
- Doing laundry.
- Taking a couple laps around your office floor.
- Walking up and down the stairs a few times.

More quick tips!

I highly recommend reading the book, *The Glucose Revolution*. In addition to my studies at IIN, this has been the most helpful resource in understanding the importance of balancing my blood sugar! Here are some more quick tips that you can implement into your everyday life that will aid in balancing your blood sugar:

1. Stop Counting Calories - Focus on the quality of the food you are eating, not the quantity. Listen to your hunger and fullness cues.
2. All Sugar Spikes the Same - It does not matter what type of sugar you consume (honey, table sugar, agave, maple syrup), they will all affect your blood sugar the same.
3. Vinegar Before Meals - Try mixing a tablespoon of apple cider vinegar into a can of sparkling water or normal water before meals. You can also buy apple cider vinegar pills to take before eating.
4. Manage Stress - It sounds easier than it is! Try to incorporate meditation or breathing exercises into your morning routines. Remember, your cortisol level is highest in the mornings, so incorporating this can set your day off on the right foot.

THE END

THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF SOMETHING GOOD.

Thanks for reading! For more helpful guides or to schedule your consultation visit:

- @holisticnutritioncoaching on Instagram
- holisticnutritioncoaching.com

