

# Curbing Your Sweet Tooth



Stable blood sugar levels are vital for health in many ways, but with regards to sweet cravings during pregnancy they are particularly helpful. When we eat carbohydrate-rich food, it's broken down in the gut and the sugar – specifically glucose - is released into the bloodstream, temporarily raising blood sugar levels. The pancreas releases insulin, a hormone that enable glucose to be carried into the cells where it is vital for energy production. If there is no immediate need, it will be stored in the liver as glycogen. Blood sugar levels then fall back down to normal again. If they drop too low, the pancreas releases

another hormone, glucagon, which causes the stored glucose to be released into the bloodstream, providing a steady supply of glucose for the cells. The adrenal glands also support the pancreas in keeping blood glucose consistent, and if blood sugars drop too low adrenalin and cortisol are released, which are both involved with increasing the amount of glucose in the blood.

So glucose isn't bad for us – frankly we wouldn't last long without it. But what the body really wants is a nice steady supply of glucose from healthy food sources, maintained within a fairly tight range. What the body doesn't require is a large amount of food that is packed with highly concentrated forms of sugar – usually with a good dose of fat and salt at the same time. These foods tend to release glucose very quickly into the blood as they don't take much digesting and have little to buffer the process. This results in a spike of blood glucose, followed by a rush of insulin. If we do this over a prolonged period, these spikes in blood glucose and insulin are dealt with less efficiently. It also puts stress on the adrenal glands as they are constantly working to maintain proper blood sugar levels.

## Symptoms of Poor Blood Sugar Control

We can end up experiencing a whole range of symptoms down the line, including tiredness, headaches, weight gain and sugar cravings. If things aren't dealt with and become more serious then significant cardiovascular and neurological problems can occur, but for the purposes of pregnancy the focus is on reducing sugar cravings and also maintaining steady energy levels.



The way to control the cravings and support blood sugar and energy levels is by **regular** snacking on foods that contain sodium, potassium and glucose from natural sources. Although exotic snacks may seem more fun, sometimes it's not a bad idea to just view what you are having as "fuel" and connect back to simplicity. It also means a lot less work, and in reality most of us just need things we can reach for with no, or little, prep time particularly when pregnant and tired. The following page contains snacks that are quick, easy and do the job, even if they aren't particularly exciting!

# Adrenal Fuel



- 1 crunchy apple, 1 large stick of celery, 1-2 Medjool dates
- 1 handful fresh berries, 1 tsp good quality honey, 1/3 cucumber
- 1 small banana, a small cup of cold coconut water, 1 tbsp of

coriander pesto (see recipe below)

- 1/3 cucumber, ½ small avocado with the juice of ½ lime
- Small glass of cold coconut water, 2 dried apricots, 1 stalk of celery
- A few fresh mango slices, ½ - 1 fresh fig, 1 stalk of celery
- 1 orange, clementine or satsuma, ½ small avocado with 1 tbsp coriander pesto
- 1 small banana, 1 Medjool date, 1 large stick of celery
- Slice of watermelon with lime juice, 1-2 stalks of celery
- 1 crunchy apple, 1 Medjool date, 1 tbsp coriander pesto
- Blend 1 glass coconut water, 1 small banana and a handful of baby leaf spinach

## Coriander Pesto

Blitz the following in a spice grinder or small blender and store in the fridge for 4-5 days:



- 1 bunch of fresh coriander
- 1 small handful of walnuts or pine nuts
- 1 clove of garlic, peeled
- Juice of 1 small lemon
- Splash or two of extra virgin olive oil or hemp oil
- Plenty of black pepper and mineral salt

Sources and further information: [www.medicalmedium.com](http://www.medicalmedium.com)