



Gestational diabetes: breakfast and snack ideas

Information for patients from the Diabetes Specialist Dietitian

To help manage your blood glucose levels during pregnancy, your dietitian may advise you to choose foods which are low in carbohydrates or carbohydrate-free. This leaflet contains a range of breakfast and snack options which may be suitable. This leaflet should be used alongside general healthy eating advice for gestational diabetes.

We hope the leaflet will help you when choosing your food. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to your dietitian.

Breakfast ideas

- **Porridge**
 - 25 to 30 grams (2 to 3 tablespoons) of uncooked whole oats made with milk, water, or unsweetened milk alternatives. Make sure your choice of milk is enriched with calcium.
 - Add cinnamon, nutmeg, or vanilla essence for flavour.
 - Include a portion of protein. This may include nuts, seeds, peanut butter, or full fat Greek yoghurt.
 - Avoid using instant or finely ground oats (such as instant sachets or Ready Brek).

- **Baked oats**

The following ingredients will make three portions.

Ingredients

- 1 cup whole oats
- 2 bananas
- 1 egg

- A pinch of baking powder
- A pinch of ground cinnamon or nutmeg
- A handful of chopped nuts of your choice.

Method

1. Mash the bananas in a bowl. Mix all the other ingredients into the banana mash.
2. Pour mixture into a non-stick baking dish. Bake in the oven at 180°C for 30 minutes.
3. Serve warm with full fat Greek yoghurt.

- **Reduced sugar granola (oat or nut based)**

- 30 to 40 grams of reduced sugar oat or nut-based granola. Add milk, unsweetened milk alternatives, or full fat Greek yoghurt.
- Choose granola with no added sugar. Low sugar varieties contain less than 5 grams of sugar per 100 grams.
- Avoid granola which contains dried fruit.
- You may add a tablespoon of fresh or frozen berries, if you wish.

- **Toast**

Use 1 thin or medium slice of bread. Choose seeded, granary, or sourdough bread, plus your choice of carbohydrate-free topping. You can mix and match toppings to suit your taste.

Carbohydrate-free toppings include:

- Eggs (use British Lion eggs, look for the red lion mark)
- Cream cheese
- Bacon
- Avocado
- Cheese (must be pasteurised)
- Mushrooms
- Grilled tomatoes and pesto
- Peanut butter.

- **A low-carb (carbohydrate) cooked breakfast**

Mix and match the following ingredients to create a low-carb cooked breakfast.

- Egg
- Grilled flat mushroom

- Grilled back bacon
- Grilled halloumi
- Fresh or tinned plum tomatoes
- Wilted spinach.

- **Omelettes**

Add your choice of carbohydrate-free filling from the list under the 'Toast' heading above.

- **Breakfast egg 'muffins'**

The following ingredients will make two portions.

Ingredients

- 4 eggs
- A splash of milk
- A sprinkle of cheese
- Your choice of filling: ham, smoked salmon, spring onions, red pepper, mushrooms.

Method

1. Finely chop your filling.
2. Combine all ingredients in a bowl.
3. Grease a non-stick muffin tray with oil or spray oil.
4. Divide mixture equally in the muffin tray.
5. Bake in the oven at 200°C for 20 to 25 minutes. Make sure the eggs are firm and thoroughly cooked through before eating.

- **Low-carb crêpes**

The following ingredients will make 8 to 10 low-carb crêpes.

Ingredients

- 100 grams of cream cheese
- 4 large eggs
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup almond flour (or finely ground almonds)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk or unsweetened milk alternative
- Oil for the pan.

Method

1. Blend all ingredients in a bowl until smooth.
2. Heat a small amount of oil in a frying pan on a low heat. Once hot, add a small amount of the mixture and swirl around the pan to create a thin layer.
3. Cook until the edges curl slightly. Carefully loosen the mixture and turn it over to cook the other side.
4. Serve with your choice of carbohydrate-free sweet or savoury topping.

- **Avoid**

Do not eat refined carbohydrates at breakfast time. These include:

- Instant oats or Ready Brek.
- Sweetened cereals, muesli, or granola.
- Refined cereals, such as Coco Pops, Rice Krispies, Frosted Shreddies, and Sugar Puffs.
- Bagels, tea cakes, and hot cross buns.
- White bread.
- Pastries, such as croissants or pain au chocolat.
- Brioche.

Snack ideas

Below is a list of carbohydrate-free and low-carb snacks. Where possible, try to choose carbohydrate-free snacks, as these will not affect your blood glucose levels.

- **Carbohydrate-free snacks**

- Cucumber, pepper, or carrot sticks with your choice of dip. Choose from hummus, salsa, guacamole, cream cheese, or cottage cheese.
- Breakfast egg muffins (see recipe above).
- 30 grams cheese (small matchbox size).
- A small handful of plain nuts or seeds.
- 1 to 2 boiled eggs.
- 2 slices of ham.
- 50 grams of olives (check how much salt is in the olives first).
- A pot of sugar free jelly.

- **Snacks containing 10 grams of carbohydrate**

- 1 crispbread, whole-wheat cracker, oat cake, breadstick, or thin slice of wholegrain bread with your choice of topping. Choose from hummus, salsa, guacamole, cream cheese, cottage cheese, cheese spread, or peanut butter.
- 15 grams plain unsweetened popcorn.
- 1 digestive or rich tea biscuit.
- 1 sliced apple with peanut butter.
- 200ml glass of milk.
- 125 gram pot of full fat plain or Greek yoghurt.

We hope the leaflet will help you when choosing your food. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to your dietitian.

References

1. The Association of UK Dietitians (BDA). Glycaemic index (GI). (<https://www.bda.uk.com/resource/glycaemic-index.html>)
2. Diabetes UK. Gestational diabetes. (<https://www.diabetes.org.uk/about-diabetes/gestational-diabetes>)
3. Dyson, P.A. et al. Diabetes UK evidence-based nutrition guidelines for the prevention and management of diabetes. *Diabetic Medicine: A Journal of the British Diabetic Association*. 2018; 35(5): 541–547 (<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/dme.13603>)
4. National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). Diabetes in pregnancy: management from preconception to the postnatal period. 2015 Feb 25; NICE guideline NG3 (last updated 16 December 2020). (<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng3>)

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- **Patient Voice Team**
Telephone: 01227 868605
Email (ekhuft.patientvoice@nhs.net)

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