

Surgery and Blood Sugar: What you need to know

Why is it important to improve high blood sugar before surgery?

Blood sugar control before, during, and after surgery is important for all people, whether or not you have diabetes. Research has shown that healthy blood sugar levels from pre-surgery through recovery can...



lower your risk for infection and other complications after surgery.



positively impact your quality of life after surgery.



and reduce how long you need to stay in the hospital after surgery.

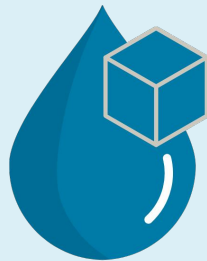
You should be an active partner in your treatment plan. Be sure to talk with your provider about questions and expectations you have for treatment, preparing for surgery, the surgery itself, and recovery.

What else should I know about high blood sugar?

- High blood sugar (also called hyperglycemia or high blood glucose) is a condition where the level of sugar in your blood is too high. This can cause problems such as insulin resistance, worsened response to infection, and conditions such as heart disease or stroke.
- **Having high blood sugar over a long period of time may indicate that you have pre-diabetes or diabetes**, or another health condition. Talk to your doctor if you want to know more about what your blood sugar levels mean.
- Ways to control your blood sugar will depend on your personal health history and what you blood sugar levels are. **Talk to your provider as soon as possible before surgery if you have or suspect you may have high blood sugar.**

Symptoms of high blood sugar may include:

- Weakness and tiredness
- Excessive thirst
- Frequent urination
- Blurry vision



Note: Some people who have high blood sugar have no symptoms at all

What can I do to improve high blood sugar before surgery?



- If you do not have a primary care provider, your surgery team should support you in creating a plan to prepare and recover from surgery.
- This plan may include monitoring your blood sugar, adjusting your diet and/or exercise habits, or starting or stopping certain medications. **It is always important to ask your healthcare team before making any changes to your diet or the way you take your medications.**



If You Have Diabetes:

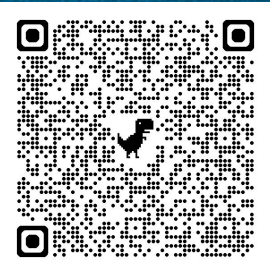
- Make a plan with your healthcare team about how to maintain healthy blood sugar before and after surgery.
- Your healthcare team, including your surgeon and primary care provider, should both know and agree to the plan, including preparation and recovery.

If You Do Not Have Diabetes:

- There is still a chance you may experience temporary blood sugar changes during surgery as part of your body's response to stress.
- Talk to your surgeon and primary care provider about making a plan to control your blood sugar if you experience high or low blood sugar during and after surgery.

Many people struggle to access healthy and fresh foods, know where and how to get medical care, and balance other life demands with treating conditions such as high blood sugar. There are resources that can help. If needed, you may seek extra support here: [\[Health plan may insert link to patient resource navigator\]](#)

[Tips for managing diabetes](#), [advice on food choices that can help manage blood sugar](#), [information about insulin](#), and [more information that may be useful for patients with hyperglycemia](#)



[More advice for preparing for surgery](#)

