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Your mission—should you choose to accept it—is to see how 4 life factors affect your blood sugar.

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These factors are food, activity, medications and insulin, and stress. Understanding how they affect blood sugar (blood glucose) can help you manage diabetes.



### **Food**

Food increases blood sugar. Carbohydrates, proteins, and fats all can affect blood sugar, but carbohydrate affects it the most.



### **Activity**

Physical activity lowers blood sugar. When you're active, your body uses glucose for energy and stores the glucose you don't use in your fat, muscles, and liver.



### **Medications and Insulin**

Different medications lower blood sugar in different ways. For example, insulin lowers blood sugar by moving glucose out of your bloodstream and into your cells. Your cells use some of that glucose for energy and store the rest for later. Metformin, another common medication, lowers blood sugar by helping your body use insulin better and by reducing the amount of sugar your body produces and absorbs.



### **Stress**

Stress increases blood sugar. Stress can be physical, emotional, or mental. When you're under stress, your liver releases glucose into the bloodstream to give you energy to deal with the stress. This "fight or flight" response is normal and is necessary for survival. When you have diabetes, your pancreas has trouble releasing the right amount of insulin needed to use the glucose the liver releases.

## **YOUR MISSION:**

As always, check your blood sugar regularly. This week, if your level is high or low, see which life factor is causing it. You might have to look at more than one. For example, if you get a low of 55 in the afternoon, look at:

1. Food—Did you eat too little carbohydrate?
2. Activity—Were you more active than usual?
3. Medications and insulin—Did you take too much medication or insulin?



# 4

## Tracking the 4 factors

Use this form to track life factors that may cause your blood sugar to be high or low.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Blood sugar level: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Effector factor: ☐ Food ☐ Activity ☐ Medications or insulin ☐ Stress

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