



## David Fairlamb

# THE FIT FACTOR

### LIFESTYLE CHANGE

Replace refined carbs (white bread, sugary snacks) with whole grains (brown rice, quinoa, oats) and fibrous vegetables. Avoid eating carbs by themselves, especially simple sugars like sweets or white bread.

### FITNESS TIP

Even a 10-15 minute walk after a meal can reduce post-meal glucose spikes.

Don't miss David's tips every Saturday in your Journal

**A**VOIDING glucose spikes and maintaining a healthy weight are key to managing energy levels and overall health. With so much temptation constantly surrounding us, it can be incredibly difficult to stick to a diet that prevents glucose spikes. They are not always caused by the obvious sweet treats.

Here are some strategies that can help:

#### Focus on low glycemic index (GI) foods

The glycemic index ranks foods based on how they affect blood sugar levels after we eat them. Low-GI foods cause slower, more gradual rises in blood glucose. Opt for foods like whole grains, beans and pulses, nuts, seeds, non-starchy vegetables, and fruits like berries or apples.

#### Increase fibre intake

Fibre slows down the absorption of sugar, reducing glucose spikes and promoting a feeling of fullness for longer. This may help to prevent you from snacking after and between meals. Include vegetables, whole fruits (instead of juices), beans and pulses, and seeds in your diet. Aim for 25-35 grams of fibre daily.

#### Pair carbohydrates with protein or healthy fats

Protein and fat slow down the digestion and absorption of carbs, reducing sharp blood sugar rises. Have nuts with fruit, pair eggs or lean meat with whole grains, or add avocado to a salad.

#### Portion control with carbohydrates

Large portions of carbs (even healthy ones) can overwhelm your body's insulin response. Keep portion sizes moderate, and balance each meal with protein and fats to slow digestion and keep glucose levels steady.

#### Regular physical activity

Exercise improves insulin sensitivity, helping your body manage glucose more efficiently. Aim for a mix of aerobic (walking, jogging) and resistance (strength training) exercises.

*Healthy is not a goal – it's a way of living*

**Motivational quote of the day**

Even a 10-15 minute walk after meals can reduce post-meal glucose spikes.

#### Hydrate well

Dehydration can lead to elevated blood sugar levels. Water helps your kidneys flush out excess glucose through urine. Drink plenty of water throughout the day and avoid sugary drinks, which can cause rapid glucose spikes.

#### Prioritise sleep

Poor sleep disrupts hormones that regulate appetite and insulin sensitivity, leading to higher blood glucose and cravings. It's not always easy but try to aim for seven to nine hours of sleep per night and maintain a consistent schedule where possible.

#### Minimise processed foods and added sugars

Processed foods are often high in simple sugars and refined carbohydrates, which cause rapid glucose spikes. Read labels to identify hidden sugars, and cook at home with whole ingredients where you can. Limit consumption of sugary drinks, sweets, pastries, and fast food. There are apps available to help you scan foods when shopping to identify ultra processed foods.



**> You will feel the benefits of making sleep a priority**

#### Include healthy fats

Fats help slow digestion and prevent blood sugar spikes. Choose sources like olive oil, nuts, seeds, avocados, and fatty fish (salmon, mackerel).

#### Reduce stress levels

Chronic stress increases cortisol, which can lead to higher blood sugar levels and insulin resistance. Be mindful of your stress levels and incorporate ways to manage and reduce your levels.

#### Limit alcohol consumption

Alcohol can cause erratic blood sugar levels, leading to both spikes and dips, depending on the type and amount consumed. If you drink, choose low-sugar options and moderate your intake. Drink plenty of water when consuming alcohol.

This balanced approach will help you control glucose levels while maintaining or even losing weight sustainably.