

# Basal and Bolus Insulin Doses and Advanced Carb Counting

Understanding your insulin routine is a key part of advanced carb counting. To better understand how insulin works, let's take a look at what happens in your body when you eat.

The foods you eat are made up of different nutrients like protein, fat, and carbohydrate.

Carbohydrates give your body energy.

When you eat foods that have carbs, your body breaks the carbs down into a simple sugar called glucose.

Glucose is absorbed into your blood, causing your blood glucose (or blood sugar) to rise. But glucose can't get to your cells on its own. It needs the help of the hormone insulin.

Insulin guides glucose to your cells. Your cells can then use the glucose as fuel.

When you have diabetes, your body either does not make enough insulin or cannot use it well. In either case, glucose stays in your blood, leading to high blood sugar.

Many people with diabetes need to take insulin to help their body process glucose and turn the food they eat into energy.

There are 2 kinds of insulin: basal and bolus.

In someone without diabetes, the body is constantly releasing a small amount of insulin into the blood. So they have energy all the time, even while sleeping.

This constant insulin is called basal insulin.

And when a person without diabetes eats carbs and the carbs change to glucose, enough insulin is released into the blood to keep their blood sugar in a healthy range.

This is called bolus insulin.

When you have diabetes, you need to take both types of insulin to mimic these actions in your body.

You can take insulin in 3 ways. You can use: a syringe, an insulin pen, or an insulin pump.

If you use a syringe or pen, you'll typically take a dose of basal insulin once or twice a day.

If you use an insulin pump, the pump will release a small amount of insulin in pulses throughout the day. It mimics the action of a healthy pancreas.

Along with your basal dose, you'll also need to take a dose of bolus insulin every time you eat.

Your bolus dose will be based on how many carbs you're about to eat and your current blood sugar level.

The goal of your bolus dose is to bring your blood sugar back to your premeal target within 3 to 4 hours of the start of your meal.

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No matter how you take your insulin, your diabetes care provider will create an insulin routine for you.

It will be based on your lifestyle, eating habits, activity levels, and other factors.

Understanding your insulin routine together with carb counting can help you maintain a healthy blood sugar level, no matter what you eat or do.