

Diabetes: Preparing for Surgery

When you have diabetes and you're having surgery, a few extra steps can help make sure things go as well as they can. Your care team will work hard to keep you safe, but there are things you can do to help too. Here are some ways you can prepare for surgery when you have diabetes.

First, do your best to keep your blood sugar within your target range in the weeks leading up to your surgery. Now, you're probably doing this already. But this is the time to really pay attention to it. Keeping your blood sugar in your target range will help the surgery go as well as it can.

Remember that lots of things can affect your blood sugar—like a change in your diet or activity. And stress can affect your blood sugar too. Because there are so many things that can affect your blood sugar, you may need to monitor it even more closely than you usually do.

Second, follow your doctor's instructions on taking medicines before your surgery. For example, if you take pills or insulin for diabetes, you may need to make changes to your usual routine.

Your doctor will tell you exactly when and how much to take before your surgery. Third, talk to your doctor about when to stop eating and drinking before the surgery. Surgery is safest when your stomach is empty.

You may even talk to your doctor about scheduling your surgery so that it's the first one in the morning. This may help shorten the amount of time you go without eating. And after surgery, be prepared to closely track your blood sugar levels.

Your doctor may ask you to do this because blood sugar levels may change as your body heals. And here's one more thing to keep in mind. It's okay to ask questions. You know your body best.

So don't be afraid to speak up and talk to your doctor about any concerns you may have about your surgery or your health.