

TESTfacts

An Educational Health Series From National Jewish Health[®]

Diabetes Clear Liquid Diets and Insulin

Your doctor has suggested you have a procedure that requires you to be on a clear liquid diet before the procedure. If you have diabetes and take Insulin this Test Facts will help you follow the clear liquid diet and control your blood sugar (glucose) levels. If, after reading this information you are still unsure as to how to dose your insulin, check with the doctor who prescribes your insulin for advice.

Types of Clear Liquids

- **Clear liquids that contain sugars include:** Gatorade, G1,2,3, sodas, fruit juices, popsicles, regular Jell-O.
- **Clear liquids that do not contain sugar include:** Unsweetened tea, black coffee, water, diet sodas, sugar-free Jell-O, clear broth, bullion, Vitamin water (Vitamin water has a small amount of sugar) GoLYTELY and HalfLYTELY do not contain sugars.
- Drink at least 8 ounces, but not more than 16 ounces, of a sugar-containing liquid at usual mealtimes while on the clear liquid diet.

Long-Acting Insulin (Lantus[®], Levemir[®], NPH or Novolin[®])

- If you take Levemir or Lantus, take your usual **full dose** of this long-acting insulin on the days you are on the clear liquid diet and on the day of the test.
- If you are on an insulin pump, keep your basal rate unchanged.
- If you take NPH insulin (Humulin N, Novolin N), **lower your usual dose by half** on the days you are on the clear liquid diet and on the day of your test. If your blood sugar goes over 200 on half doses, go back to your full dose.

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Mealtime (Short-Acting) Insulin (Humalog®, NovoLog®, Apidra®, Humulin® R, Novolin® R)

- If you count carbohydrates as a way to dose mealtime insulin, dose your insulin based on the carb content of the clear liquid diet.

Example:

Say, for breakfast, you usually take 1 unit of short-acting insulin for every 10 gram carb serving (insulin: carb ratio is 1:10) You decide to drink 8 ounces of apple juice for breakfast, which is 2 carb servings, or 30 grams of carbohydrate.

- You should take 3 units of mealtime insulin, just before drinking the apple juice.

- If you **do not count carbohydrates** for your mealtime insulin dose, you should lower your dose of mealtime insulin **by half**, on the day you start clear liquids.

Example:

Say, for breakfast, you usually take 10 units of mealtime insulin before eating. You decide to drink 8 ounces of apple juice as your breakfast.

- You should lower your dose from 10 units to 5 units, taken just before the apple juice.

Treating Low Blood Sugar

- While on clear liquids, check your blood sugar four times a day (at your usual mealtimes and at bedtime) or anytime you have symptoms of a low blood sugar. Common symptoms of a low blood sugar may include: shakiness, dizziness, sweating and headache. If your blood sugar drops under 70, you should immediately take 15 grams of glucose gel (1 tube). This will usually raise your blood sugar by 50 points in about 15 minutes. Be sure to re-check your blood sugar 15 minutes after treatment, to make sure it is over 70. If not, take a second tube of gel.

Treating High Blood Sugar

- If your blood sugar stays over 400 for more than 4 hours, call the doctor who prescribes your insulin for advice.

Driving home after procedures

- Depending on the procedure National Jewish may recommend a family member or friend drive you home.
- If you drive home National Jewish Health **strongly** recommends that you check your blood sugar every time before driving a car. Your blood sugar should be 100 or higher before driving.
- Keep fast-acting sugar with you in your car (glucose gel, glucose tablets or hard candy).

Remember:

- If you are still unsure as to how to dose your insulin, check with the doctor who prescribes your insulin for advice.
- Bring your glucose meter and test strips to National Jewish Health on your test day.

How do you get to your procedure?

On the day of your scheduled test, check in at the Front Desk. If you have questions before or during your test please call 303-398-1355. Also, if you need to cancel the appointment or change the time please call.

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