

Weekly Health Digest

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Article: DASH4D Diet for Glycemic Control and Glucose Variability in Type 2 Diabetes: A Randomized Crossover Trial

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What Did Scientists Study?

Doctors at Johns Hopkins tested a special diet for people with type 2 diabetes. It's called the DASH4D diet. It is a new version of the classic DASH diet, made just for people with diabetes. Eighty-nine adults took part. Each person tried different diets, one after another, so scientists could compare them fairly within the same person. This kind of study is called a crossover trial.

Why Does This Matter?

About 35 million Americans live with type 2 diabetes. Keeping blood sugar steady is one of the hardest parts of managing it. Blood sugar that runs too high, or swings

up and down, raises the risk of heart disease, kidney damage, and nerve problems. Many people with diabetes also have high blood pressure. A food plan that helps with both would be a big win.

What Did They Find?

For 20 weeks, participants ate meals prepared for them at a research center. Each person spent five weeks on the DASH4D diet and five weeks on a typical American diet, with a saltier and a lower-salt version of each. They wore a [continuous glucose monitor](#), a small skin patch that tracks blood sugar all day and night.

When people ate the DASH4D diet, their average blood sugar ran 11 points lower than when they ate the standard diet. They also spent an extra 75 minutes a day with blood sugar in a healthy range. People who started with the highest [HbA1c](#) got the biggest benefit — their healthy-range time grew by almost three hours a day. Blood sugar was also steadier, and low blood sugar episodes did not increase. A related study using the same diet found it lowered blood pressure too, helping with [hypertension](#).

What Can You Do?

The DASH4D diet tweaks the original DASH plan. It has fewer carbs, more [unsaturated fats](#), and less [sodium](#), with lower potassium than classic DASH (helpful if your kidneys need extra care). In everyday terms, that looks like more fish/legumes, nuts, olive oil, and non-starchy vegetables, fewer refined carbs and sugary drinks, and lighter salt use. Try swapping one processed or high-carb meal a day for a plate built around vegetables, lean protein/beans, and healthy fats. Talk with your doctor before making big changes, especially if you take insulin or blood pressure medicine.

Bottom Line

A DASH-style diet built for diabetes can lower blood sugar, keep it steadier, and support healthy blood pressure — all without a new prescription.

Definitions

Type 2 diabetes: A condition where the body can't use blood sugar properly, so sugar levels stay too high. It's the most common form of diabetes and is linked to diet, weight, and genetics. [↑ Back Wikipedia](#)

DASH diet: Short for "Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension." An eating plan rich in fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy, and low in salt and saturated fat, designed to lower blood pressure. [↑ Back Wikipedia](#)

Crossover trial: A study where each person tries multiple treatments, one after another, so researchers can compare results within the same person instead of between different people. [↑ Back Wikipedia](#)

Blood glucose: The amount of sugar in your blood, which your body uses for energy. Keeping it in a healthy range is a key goal for people with diabetes. [↑ Back Wikipedia](#)

Continuous glucose monitor (CGM): A small wearable sensor, usually worn on the arm or belly, that measures blood sugar every few minutes throughout the day and night. [↑ Back Wikipedia](#)

HbA1c: A blood test that shows your average blood sugar level over the past two to three months. Higher numbers mean higher average blood sugar. [↑ Back Wikipedia](#)

Hypertension: The medical term for high blood pressure, a condition that makes the heart work harder and raises the risk of heart attack and stroke. [↑ Back Wikipedia](#)

Unsaturated fats: Heart-healthy fats found in foods like olive oil, nuts, and fish. They can help lower harmful cholesterol when they replace saturated fats. [↑ Back Wikipedia](#)

Sodium: A mineral found in salt. Too much sodium in the diet can raise blood pressure in many people. [↑ Back Wikipedia](#)