

DENNIS POLLOCK

*Author of **Overcoming Runaway Blood Sugar***

Foreword by **PAUL SANEMAN, MD**

60 WAYS
to Lower Your
BLOOD
SUGAR

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Simple Steps to Reduce the Carbs,
Shed the Weight, and Feel Great Now!

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Dedication

To my sweet lady and my best friend, my wife, Benedicta, who is truly a gift from God to me.

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Foreword

The relationship of obesity to blood-sugar problems and type 2 diabetes has been known for years. In this country today, the weight problem is epidemic. Just look around the next time you go to a restaurant, supermarket, or anyplace there are lots of people and see how many of them are overweight.

Dieting to lose weight is important, of course, but just what foods are better for your health to accomplish this task? The author has spent much effort selecting not only foods but a lifestyle to deal primarily with his blood-sugar problem—and with great success. The changes he suggests are not necessarily easy, but the end result is what is important. Eating a healthy diet will prevent many medical problems and decrease or eliminate the need for expensive medications. As I would tell my patients, all the food God made is good. But, what people do to it may not be—and this is manifested by what you see today in this country.

How earnestly do you want to be healthy? How motivated are you? How committed are you? Moderation in all you eat, as well as motivation to select healthy foods, are essential; both are wisely stressed by the author. As you read this book, may you be inspired to deal with your own issues for the sake of your better health.

Paul Saneman, MD, ABOG

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The Simple and Basic Keys

Diabetes is on the rise in America. This is not a new phenomenon. It has been steadily increasing for years and shows no signs of letting up. It is projected that within another 50 years one in three Americans will be diabetic.

There is a note of hope in this, however. The fact that the rate of diabetes can increase reveals that there are factors we can control—things we can do to decrease our chances of becoming diabetic, or if already diabetic, to begin to reverse the process. If diabetes were totally unrelated to lifestyle factors, it would neither increase nor decrease from one age to another, or from one culture to another. This is clearly not the case.

As is true in so many areas of life, our primary problem is not ignorance of what we should do; it is a lack of motivation to do what we know we need to do. In my previous book, *Overcoming Runaway Blood Sugar*, I shared my own experience with blood sugar that rose precipitously high and dropped dangerously low. By the time I was in my forties my blood sugar was totally out of control. My pancreas was working just fine, but it was being overworked by a body that was no longer processing carbs and sugar efficiently. A high-carb meal could raise my blood sugar to twice the normal level or higher, and then within a couple of hours, after my abused pancreas had gamely dumped prodigious amounts of insulin into my bloodstream, it might fall to half of normal. I would be trembling violently and feeling like I was about to pass out, which I did in public once, to my shock and embarrassment.

At first I had no clue as to what was going on in my body, but had some suspicions that it had to do with blood sugar. After obtaining a blood-glucose monitor, I started checking my blood sugar several times a day. I soon realized that what I put in my mouth an hour or two previously had everything to do with the kind of numbers I was seeing on the monitor. Lots of pasta, a big dessert, and a soda to wash it all down led to disastrous numbers. But a large chef salad with eggs, ham, and garden vegetables, with water to drink, produced beautiful numbers.

Not content to merely observe, I started reading different books and articles related to blood sugar. Trying to stay mainstream, I discovered that the most reputable and conservative authors came to the same conclusions. The three basic means of controlling blood sugar are *reducing carbohydrates*, *regular exercise*, and *shedding excess weight*. Now I had hope! As fearful as those trembling episodes had been, my attitude was, *Give me something concrete to do about this, and I'll do it!* I plunged into making the necessary changes and was thrilled to see my numbers go down and stay down. They have now been that way for years.

Most diabetics know the steps they must take to bring their blood sugar to a normal state and prevent long-term damage to their body. But making the necessary changes seems just too tall a mountain to climb. Besides, at the present they may feel

just fine. They still have pep, they feel great—in fact, after eating a high-carb meal they feel especially good! They do not realize that they are well along on the journey to sores that refuse to heal, heart disease, kidney failure, leg amputations, and premature death. The irony is that the changes they are avoiding, while not unsubstantial, are not nearly as difficult or painful as they think.

This book does not take the place of a good doctor! **If you are diabetic you absolutely need to be seeing a doctor.** If you suspect you are diabetic you need to go to a doctor and get yourself checked. The ideas in this book are made to complement the advice and care of your physician.

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In this little book I intend to put some very simple basic keys in your hand that will help you, step by step, make the necessary changes with the least amount of pain. I have never particularly liked pain. In fact any time I can avoid it, I surely will. The idea of being some kind of a grim diabetes martyr, never enjoying a meal, forcing myself to do physical workouts I hate, never indulging my sweet tooth (actually teeth), and walking away from every meal constantly hungry is something I have no interest in. The good news is—*it's not necessary.*

This is not a complex book. If you are looking for theories and large words and scientific terms, you won't find too much here. But if you are struggling and failing to keep your blood sugar under control, you will find some simple steps you can take to turn the thermostat down that controls the raging fire of your runaway blood sugar.

Nor is there anything wacky here. As I mentioned, the changes suggested have been known and recommended by the professionals for decades. But what is different about this book is that it puts in your hands a game plan you can easily understand and implement, along with some inspirational thoughts to stay the course. It is written by a regular guy for regular people who want to live out their lives in health.

As you read through the chapters, you will find some thoughts and concepts repeated. This is deliberate. We humans need to hear things more than once to really get them. Nor are the chapters necessarily sequential. They are ideas, tips, things to do, things to stop doing, and even some recipes.

These “ways” are not the end-all of behavior modifications for diabetics, but they make up a powerful set of adjustments and insights that can make a significant improvement in your prospects for a healthy life and a place at the weddings of your grandchildren.

Go ahead—dare to make some changes. You'll find that you can feel better now—and better yet in the future!

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Monitor Thyself

Most of the concepts we will be looking at could be read and embraced in no specific order. However, this particular thought really does need to be first. If you have blood-sugar issues, or merely suspect that you have them, you need to get a blood-sugar monitor. If the idea of frequently having your blood drawn turns you off—well, better to draw a little speck of blood a couple of times a day rather than to have your blood filled with sugar, destroying your organs, sapping your strength, and bringing you to an early grave.

I will never forget the first time I checked my blood sugar. I was at my office, and our assistant brought me an extra monitor from home (her husband was diabetic). I had shared with her and some of the others at the office some of my “shaky” experiences, and she wisely perceived that this was a problem with blood sugar. I suspected as much, but didn’t want to face the truth.

Mg/dl stands for “**milligrams per deciliter**,” the standard of measurement for blood glucose.

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I was terrified. I had read enough to know that 80 to 120 mg/dl was the ideal, and I was fearful about what mine would be. What if I was a raging diabetic with a level of 500? In fact I was so nervous I couldn’t seem to get a full drop of blood on the stick, and we had to try several times and several pricks. I watched the monitor with a racing heart as I waited for the verdict that might determine the rest of my life. Finally it came, and it was decent—in the 120s as I remember.

Feeling emboldened, I checked myself a couple of hours later, and my level had dropped to around 60 (too low). I was too ignorant at this point to know why it would drop so much, but at least I was off and running. I would be taking hundreds of blood-sugar readings in the next year. Eventually I began to use these readings to make decisions about what kinds of foods were best for me to eat. Lo and behold, I found out that the higher the carbohydrate content of the foods I ate, the greater the rise in my blood sugar (no surprise, right?). Like most people I assumed that foods known for being sugary were the main things I should avoid. But my glucometer taught me an interesting lesson: carbs (carbohydrates) will affect our blood sugar, regardless of their source.

For example, if you place a bagel next to a candy bar and ask people which is more

likely to affect blood sugar, most people would say the candy bar. Yet the candy bar may have 28 grams of carbs and the bagel may have 50. And if you say no to the candy bar but yes to the bagel, feeling very proud of yourself, and then go and check your blood sugar when it is at its peak, you will be shocked that your body wasn't particularly impressed with your choice. Your blood sugar most likely soared higher after the bagel than it would have had you eaten the candy bar.

If you read any competent articles or books they will unanimously tell you to check your blood sugar frequently if you have diabetes. It is also a good idea to check yourself if you are hypoglycemic (have low blood sugar frequently) or if you bounce up and down (as I used to). But why is this necessary? There are two primary, very powerful reasons to do this, and they have to do with assessment and accountability.

First, people always do better where there is accountability. When there is tangible evidence of how well or poorly we have been doing there will be far more motivation to improve than when we are left in the dark to guess our performance. Early on in my blood-checking I ate a meal of a hamburger with a large bun and a bunch of Fritos. I waited about an hour and a half, took my blood sugar, and felt sick to see the meter read well above the normal range. From that point on I had a fresh view of burgers with large buns and Fritos.

If you are to succeed in your struggle against high blood sugar, you need motivation, motivation, and more motivation! Anything that will increase your motivation you must embrace; anything that decreases it must be avoided. And there is hardly a better motivator than one of these little blood-glucose monitors. They will not lie to you and will tell you the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

There are a gazillion books on the market about diabetes and blood sugar, and myriads of theories. Some folks will tell you to swear off all animal products and become a vegetarian. Others will tell you to pile on the meat, cover it with cheese, and then pile on more meat. Some will tell you that diabetes has no cure and others will swear that they alone possess the knowledge that will totally cure you. Who do you trust?

My suggestion, first of all, is to go mainstream. Don't take too much stock in the writings of someone who writes about diabetes and then mentions that he has also found a cure for cancer, has discovered the secret to living to be 200, and uncovered 100 different conspiracies by our government. And—oh yeah—he was once abducted by aliens, who taught him the secrets he now shares with you.

Second, believe your blood-glucose monitor. Some folks will tell you that fruit is so healthy for us and contains so many important vitamins that you can eat as much of it as you like. "Go ahead—indulge in that pineapple, eat that huge orange, and gulp down that big glass of apple juice. It's good for you!" Well, if you want to do that, be sure to have your blood-glucose meter nearby. About an hour later check and see what your fruit orgy has done to your blood sugar. You'll think twice about overdosing on fruit again. (I am not saying to avoid fruit. But you cannot give it a free pass and eat as much as you want without considering the carbs you are ingesting. More in a later chapter.)

There are two types of readings that are important. First you will want to check

your fasting blood sugar. This is done when you first rise in the morning, before you eat anything. Readings in the 80s are ideal, in the 90s, decent, and over 100 is problematic. The ADA (American Diabetes Association) considers you diabetic if you consistently are over 126. Your fasting blood-sugar level is like a report card. If you are diabetic or prediabetic and have not been eating right for some time, your fasting blood sugar will usually rise and tattle on you. If you have been behaving yourself and doing what you should be doing it will tend to go down toward an acceptable level and stay that way.

A second highly significant reading is the one that tells us the effect of our last meal. This is especially critical in the early stages of discovering the dietary changes and adjustments that must be made. Not all people have their blood-sugar peak at the same time. For most people it will be about an hour to an hour and a half after they take the last bite of their previous meal. Take enough readings to find out the typical amount of time after a meal for your blood sugar to reach its peak. If your pancreas is still working well, the time will be shorter and the peak won't last too long, but if it is on the way out the peak may stretch out for a couple of hours.

Your tests will soon reveal your peak time, and this should be when you test yourself to discover how a particular meal has affected you. Ideally your blood-sugar level should not peak any higher than 140 to 145 mg/dl. Start with some of your favorite meals and see how they affect your blood sugar. It will be enlightening, and give you the courage to make the changes and adjustments that need to be made to keep your blood sugar under control.

Mirrors are something we take for granted, but where would we be without them? Almost all of us make use of mirrors every day. Is our hair looking all right? Does this shirt really work for us? Do we have anything in our nose that doesn't belong there? Of course mirrors can be a bit cruel. When we gain weight they expose it mercilessly. But they tell us the truth and they motivate us. If our hair is mussed, we will take the extra time to deal with it. If there is dirt on our face, we will wash ourselves.

So it is with your friendly little blood-glucose monitor. Those bold black numbers will either compliment you and encourage you to keep on with what you're doing, or they will shout at you to stop, turn around, and go the other way. Your meter is your friend. Treat it well, think fond thoughts of it, and listen when it speaks.

Carb-Cutting

There is no getting around it. If you want permanent control over blood sugar, you are going to have to cut some things out of your diet. You are going to have to control your carbohydrate intake. No, you will not need to do away with all carbs. That would be unwise, unhealthy, and just plain stupid. Our bodies need some carbohydrates daily for optimum health. But we don't need nearly so many as most Americans continually eat!

In earlier days, processed food was unheard of. Today's desserts did not exist. A dessert in those days was to eat an apple or some grapes or a watermelon. There was no soda, no doughnuts, no sugary cereals in dazzling colors, and nobody had ever heard of pizza. People worked hard, most stayed slim, and they ate whole grains, meat (when they could get it), vegetables, and enjoyed a little fruit in season. Diabetes was rare.

That was then; this is now. We have discovered thousands of ways to fill ourselves with sugar, stuff our stomachs with pasta, and glut ourselves on white rice and white bread. To make matters worse we wash all these things down with supersized sodas loaded with, you guessed it, more sugar. What's wrong with this picture?

As I began to research the causes of runaway blood sugar I began to discover some of the basics of good health and learned why the standard American diet is so pathetic, and why it leads folks like me straight to the land of diabetes once our youthful metabolism begins to give way to its slower, middle-aged replacement.

It is not that our bodies need no sugar; they most definitely do. They simply don't need nearly as much as we are shoveling into them. Many nutritionists believe a glass or two of red wine each day may be healthy for you. But drinking a dozen glasses of wine at each meal will destroy you. So it is with carbohydrates. A thin slice of whole-grain bread with an otherwise low-carb meal is no problem. A small portion of brown rice, along with some grilled chicken and a salad is reasonable. But a breakfast of a large bowl of sugary cereal, a couple of slices of bread, and a big glass of orange juice is dietary suicide. You are throwing so many carbs at your abused and overworked pancreas it has no idea where to even start. All it can do is dump out as much insulin as it can possibly manage.

If your pancreas hasn't yet been severely damaged by your abuse, it will provide enough insulin to eventually get the job done, but most likely you will experience a blood-sugar spike initially and then a miserable sinking feeling in a couple of hours when all that insulin forces your blood sugar toward dangerously low levels. If your pancreas is no longer capable of providing sufficient insulin, your blood sugar will

stay elevated for many hours, damaging organs and nerves. When this goes on for years it will eventually take an enormous toll on your health and your life.

If you are starting to show rising blood sugar you need to start making some changes, and the first change on the list needs to be a significant reduction of high-carb foods. It is not spinach or cucumbers or tuna that are making your blood sugar soar; it is Sugar Smacks and doughnuts, and chocolate cake and lasagna and Dr. Pepper, and cinnamon rolls and...well, you get the idea!

There are many offenders in the high-carb category, but here are some of the worst:

Potatoes are one of the highest-carb foods on your table. What's more, the many carbs they possess break down with blazing speed into sugars once inside your body. Other than the fact that you get some extra nutrients, there is not much difference between eating a potato and eating a very large candy bar. A large baked potato or a large helping of mashed potatoes will contain about 60 grams of carbs. A normal Snickers bar has around 34 grams of carbs. Many well-meaning diabetics wouldn't dare touch the Snickers bar, and yet feel no concern over flooding their bloodstream with massive amounts of sugar from potatoes every evening. Whether you get hit by a bullet from a cheap, scratched pistol or an expensive, shiny new one, a bullet is still a bullet, and you're in trouble either way.

Bread seems like such a natural food that it is hard to imagine anyone having anything bad to say about it.

Bread in its whole-grain form isn't a bad food, but there is no getting around it—for people with blood-sugar problems it is problematic. Even whole-wheat bread can spell trouble for diabetics and people who are insulin-resistant. Its carbs may break down into sugar a little slower than the white bread, and it is definitely more nutritious, but those carbs can still rise up and bite you.

Rice is awesome, as far as taste is concerned. To drench it with some kind of sauce and have some pieces of meat throughout the mix is a taste sensation. But like bread, rice is a high-carb food. You cannot eat it as often as you like or as much as you like. And don't be fooled into thinking this only applies to white rice. A cup of white rice contains 49.6 grams of carbs (a candy bar and a half). Depending on the brand, brown rice is not far behind, and certain brands actually contain slightly more carbs. Granted, the brown rice has more fiber, but those carbs are still going to be a problem for people who struggle with blood sugar.

Desserts and sugary foods and drinks. If something tastes sweet, there is a good reason for that. Unless it has been artificially sweetened it is going to be loaded with sugar. And when that sugar hits your bloodstream, your blood-sugar level is going to soar.

I grew up (in the 1960s) hearing a never-ending commercial that told me, "Wonder Bread **builds strong bodies 12 ways.**" (Back in the 1930s they used the

same slogan, but it promised a mere 8 ways.)

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If you ever plan to get your blood sugar under control you are going to have to cut back on these kinds of foods. It would be marvelous if you could corral your blood sugar without changing your diet. If we could just keep on eating those same good old foods that we grew up on—breads and pasta and rolls and biscuits; heaping helpings of rice and beautiful, plump baked potatoes. Finishing each meal with a big bowl of ice cream drenched in chocolate syrup. We dare to dream, *Perhaps there is some new plan or medicine that will make that possible.* Forget it—it's not going to happen.

When you sit down at a table you need to immediately begin to assess the foods laid out before you. *There's a bowl of green beans—no problem there. I can have a big helping of those. Look at those beautiful avocados—I'm going to really enjoy one of those. Uh-oh, there's a problem! Look at that bowl of rice. I'm going to have to make sure my portion is about the size I would give my six-year-old daughter.*

To be effective at lowering your blood sugar you must become sensitive to and aware of the blood-sugar-raising potential of the foods you consume. You need to be able to look at a food and instantly be able to categorize it as safe, unsafe, or so-so. The unsafe foods may be perfectly wonderful foods for people without blood-sugar problems. But not for you. You can still eat them occasionally, but not in the quantity that you did before. You now march to the beat of a different drummer.

Nuts to You!

One common problem for people who switch to a low-carb diet is that they often figure out what *not* to eat far more quickly than what they *can* eat. Stay away from that cake! Don't go near those doughnuts! Watch out for that nice baked potato! The "thou shalt not's" loom large, but the "thou shalt's" are sometimes hard to determine. Allow me to give you a major "thou shalt." Thou shalt eat nuts, all kinds of nuts, and frequently!

So what's so great about nuts? For starters, they are high in protein and relatively low in carbs. (One little problem is that the nut many people find the tastiest of all, the cashew, has twice the carbs that most nuts have, and is probably the one you should go easy on.) But as a whole, nuts are nutritious and pack a lot of power in their nutty little shape. Years ago they were thought to be problematic since they contain a lot of fat, but they have made a tremendous comeback as researchers are finding that they actually promote a healthy heart. Consider the following:

Researchers from Harvard Medical School and the Harvard School of Public Health have examined the effect of eating nuts on cardiovascular health, reports the *Harvard Men's Health Watch*. "Their work shows that nuts really are healthy, especially for men at risk for heart disease," says Dr. Harvey B. Simon, editor.

Studies show that healthy men, and those who have already suffered a heart attack, can reduce cardiovascular risk by eating nuts regularly. Doctors theorize that:

- nuts may help lower cholesterol, partly by replacing less healthy foods in the diet
- nuts contain mono- and polyunsaturated fats known to benefit the heart
- the omega-3 fats found in walnuts may protect against irregular heart rhythms
- nuts are rich in arginine, a substance that may improve blood vessel function
- other nutrients in nuts (such as fiber and vitamin E) may also help lower cardiovascular risk.¹

For those with blood-sugar problems, nuts are truly a godsend. Nuts of all kinds—almonds, Brazil nuts, pistachios, walnuts, and even the lowly peanut (which is actually related more to beans than to tree nuts)—are gifts from heaven. Giving up those salty, bad-for-you snack foods doesn't mean you have to go hungry. Nuts are your

replacement for those blood-sugar-spikers like potato chips, nachos, french fries, Cheetos, Doritos, and the like. Not only are nuts much lower in carbs than nearly all our favorite American snacks, but they rank low on the glycemic index, which means that they break down very, very slowly in your body. And this means that the few carbohydrates that they do contain will be broken down into sugars slowly, gradually, and gently. Be sure to get unsalted nuts where possible, however.

Nuts are pretty high in calories so if weight is an issue for you, it would be best to eat them in moderation. In my case, when I first went low-carb I lost so much weight that if it weren't for nuts, I would have been in real trouble. As I learned more about what I could eat, that became less of an issue, but nuts have been a regular part of my diet for years now.

For those whose blood-sugar levels can go in either extreme, nuts are a terrific food for keeping things humming along smoothly. When you eat a meal, the high-carb, high-glycemic-index foods are going to break down first and rudely shove their sugars into your bloodstream. If those were the only foods you ate, your body would be forced to produce prodigious amounts of insulin in a hurry to deal with all those carbs. And after two or three hours, when the insulin had done its job and dealt with all that sugar, there would likely be a lot of leftover insulin looking for sugar to neutralize, but finding none. And when this happens, your blood-sugar levels can drop precipitously. This is when you find yourself shaking and feeling like you are about to faint. This occurs most often when your body is becoming insulin-resistant (becoming highly inefficient at cooperating with the insulin produced by your pancreas), and yet your pancreas is still capable of producing insulin in large amounts. This can also happen when you take pills to stimulate insulin production.

The Mayo Clinic folks say this about nuts: **“Eating nuts reduces your risk of developing blood clots** that can cause a fatal heart attack. Nuts also improve the health of the lining of your arteries.”²

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When you include nuts in your meal, the nuts “hang around” much longer than the baked potato or chips ever could, and the slow release of their carbs gives the leftover insulin something to munch on, so it doesn't take its revenge by driving your sugar levels too low. Thus no shaky or fainting episodes. Nuts also have the advantage of being extremely portable. Sure, you can take a bag of chips with you, but it's harder to carry around. You can keep a small bag of nuts with you in your purse or pocket and have an easy snack that will barely budge your blood sugar. Sometimes I take them with me to McDonald's to enjoy with a hamburger and a diet Coke. They are about a zillion times better for you than the french fries.

In short, enjoy nuts often. They are the new chips for you. They taste just as good (I think better), evidence suggests they are good for your heart, and without a doubt they are far better in helping you to manage your blood sugar.

Pizza Made Possible

Making dietary changes is not that hard. Losing weight is not particularly difficult. Lots of people do it every year. But making *permanent* dietary changes, especially when it involves giving up foods you have cherished and delighted in all of your life, is extremely difficult. Most people who lose weight by a change in diet will sooner or later, and probably sooner, return to their old ways, habits, and foods and gain back every pound they have lost—with interest!

In order for a new, improved diet and lifestyle to be permanent there have to be two factors present: 1) there must be some real motivation to make those changes, and 2) the new lifestyle has to be as realistic and easy as possible while still bringing the desired results. This is why drastic, draconian, unrealistic cutbacks on everything that has ever given us comfort and pleasure are simply not going to work. Most folks can make those sacrifices for a few weeks; almost nobody can make them for a year, let alone a lifetime.

As we seek to turn from the lifestyle that led us into the land of runaway blood sugar, there will have to be some serious changes made—no doubt about it. But we want to make it as much like your old lifestyle as possible. Although you need to turn from the standard American diet, you don't need to stop being American. Superman used to make it his motto to fight for truth, justice, and the American way. And the American way is to go out to restaurants frequently: Italian restaurants, Chinese restaurants, steak restaurants, Mexican restaurants, and yes, pizza restaurants.

Is it possible to go out for pizza and stay low-carb? It is indeed. Let's consider the makeup of a pizza. While most health purists consider pizza a monstrous concoction, in truth many of the ingredients are either harmless or actually good for you. Pizza sauce is mostly tomatoes—a little higher in carbs than we would prefer, but not too bad. And of course pizzas have to have cheese—a fairly low-carb food. No problem with any meats they might have on top—meats have so few carbs they're not worth mentioning. Mushrooms—no problem there. Jalapeno pepper slices—no carbs to speak of (if you can take the hot sensation).

This brings us to the real problem—the bread, the foundation upon which the pizza stands. If only we could put all those ingredients on a huge lettuce leaf! (Actually, we could, but nobody would want it.) It is this bread that will go into your stomach, be quickly converted to sugar, surge through your blood, and raise your blood-sugar level through the roof.

So when our friends invite us out, how do we avoid looking silly as we munch on

our lowly salad, drink a glass of water, and look longingly at everybody else's heaping plates of pepperoni pizza? There are three basic guidelines for eating pizza and keeping your blood sugar under control.

First, *make sure to eat a large salad*. In some pizza restaurants they have a salad bar where you take as much as you want. Take a lot! Be sure to eat the salad first, with a low-carb dressing like ranch or Italian. By starting here you will dull your appetite and won't be tempted to overeat on the pizza. This is especially important in buffet-style pizza restaurants, where you can keep coming back for more pizza—and more and more and more.

Second, *order thin-crust pizza*. Remember, the cheese, the sauce, the pepperoni or sausage, and the mushrooms are not the problem. If you can just reduce the amount of bread you are eating, you can win. If you can cut the bread in half, you will only be dealing with half the carbs and will have done your overworked pancreas a great favor. So by all means choose the thin crust. You have just cut the carbs your body must process in half (more if you compare it with the thick-crust pizza).

Finally, *deal with the edge of the pizza*, which is always the thickest part. Thick dough: more carbs; thin dough: fewer carbs. So do yourself a favor and break off that fat edge and save even more.

By taking these steps you will have turned a blood-sugar disaster into a meal that is manageable. (You still cannot eat as much as you want. Limit yourself to three or four pieces.)

Be sure to check your blood sugar about an hour after you have taken your last bite. If it has risen to no higher than 140 to 145 you have done it! You have eaten out at a pizza restaurant, enjoyed pizza, laughed and joked with your friends or family, and still kept your blood sugar in check. If your monitor reads 150 or above, take one less piece the next time. Keep reducing the number of pieces until your post-meal reading falls within the desired range (This number varies depending on who you read, but about 140 to 150 mg/dl is about as high as you should ever want to see on your blood-glucose monitor for your post-meal reading.)

You can't exactly do it the way you used to, but you can still eat pizza at a pizza restaurant. You can play your part in truth, justice, and the American way—well, at least the American way!



I don't really know why this is, but it just seems flat wrong to eat pizza without drinking a soda. If you can get by on water or unsweetened tea, then by all means do that. But if (like me) you feel you just have to have soda to wash down that wonderful pizza, **make it a diet soda**. A regular soda is absolutely loaded with sugar and will ruin your good intentions no matter how much you watch your pizza. Sodas are right up there with candy bars, baked potatoes, and cotton candy. They are monsters that will kick your blood sugar into orbit. There can be no compromising here—if you must drink a soda, **make it a diet soda**. But don't drink these too often.

