



## Episode 8

### **Eat Like a Diabetic So You Don't Become One and the \$21 Hot Dog**

Good morning. Welcome to Toni Talks Humanity Matters. If you haven't guessed by now, this is Toni. Not short for anything, not Antoinette, not Antonia. It's plain and it's simple. Just four little letters. I wish life was just as uncomplicated, but we all know that it is not. My job is to take complicated stuff and break it down into manageable experiences for you. Because frankly, nutrition details are not just overwhelming, they can be downright boring. I know because I've studied volumes of medical textbooks that describe how our bodies work, how we metabolize food, how our bodies create and use energy, how we build muscle, and how we improve our body composition down to the cellular level. And information changes constantly. Staying on top of medical advances, research studies, and the latest diet trends is absolutely dizzying. In addition to all the questions I get about them, but one thing does remain constant and that is how our bodies are impacted by poor diet choices. So today our topic is Eat Like a Diabetic So You Don't Become One and the \$21 Hot Dog.

Approximately 88 million American adults--that's more than one in three-- have pre-diabetes, which is a precursor to diabetes type two, and the scary part is of those with pre-diabetes more than 80% don't know they have it. And that puts us at risk, increased risk, for not just developing type two diabetes, but also heart disease and stroke. So why do we become pre-diabetic, right? How does that

happen? Well, it's mostly because of our diet choices. But of course, there are other types of influences involved as far as our exercise and our sleep, our fitness, heredity, that kind of thing. However, most of us can become pre-diabetic and we can avoid it through nutritional changes.

Essentially what I'm saying is we need to combine our foods and eat like a diabetic so that we can balance our blood sugars. That is totally within our control. And the number one thing that we can do is literally cut the crap out of our diet, we are abusing our bodies, I really believe that every time that we eat overly processed foods, and we're not getting the nutrition we need, every time we drink a coke or a soda, whatever the brand it is, it doesn't matter. All that sugar impacts our bodies. We drink way too much wine at a time. We grab an apple and a bagel, right? So just eating pure carbohydrates. It forces our bodies into the situation where it's just working way, way too hard to try to balance out and we are abusing our bodies. I will say that again. I really believe it's a form of, of self-abuse when we're not taking care of ourselves like the way that we should be. And we all do it, but it's really the degree. We don't have to eat perfectly all the time. But if we have diets where we're subsisting on just like grab and go; grab a bagel, grab whatever is convenient rather than really thinking through what it is that your body needs.

We're putting ourselves at risk for spiking our blood sugar. And so that could be like I said, really simple carbohydrate and carbohydrates I think get a bad rap because they're not all bad, at all. Certainly, fruits and vegetables are carbohydrates. Very good for you. Whole grains, very good for you. Right? It's when we strip things down. We eat white bread and or sourdough bread instead of whole grains, those kinds of things. So, the way our bodies work is that when we are bombarding our bodies with this crap food, I don't even call it food. It's really not. It's this manufactured, overly processed, sugary, you know, pure, stripped carbohydrate type of food is that our pancreas--we are forcing our pancreas to work overtime.

So, our pancreas is responsible for creating two hormones. And those two hormones are designed to balance our bodies like we, we are designed to be in balance. It's only when we push these limits that our bodies retaliate and rebel and say, I'm going to get sick, I'm going to get disease.

All right, so these two hormones that our pancreas makes one is insulin--that I know you've heard of-- the other one you may or may not have heard of, and that's called glucagon. And these two hormones, if you can imagine just kind of like being in a river in a little boat, and you're going down this stream or this river, and on one side, you've got insulin, and on the other side, you've got glucagon. And both of the responsibilities of these hormones are to keep you in the middle of this of this river. As you're going down this river. Pretend that you just ate something badly for you say had a bagel and you're going to go a little bit off to the right, your blood sugar is going to go too high, and insulin will kick in. It says "Nope, nope, nope!" You know, insulin, your glucose, you're too high, we're going to try to push you down into the center of the river again, what that insulin is going to do, it's going to take those sugar or glucose molecules that are coursing through your veins that are causing inflammation and damage and it's going to store them as fat. And what happens though, is when you do that too much, your insulin is always kicking in, and eventually it takes more insulin to do that same job that it did the last time you ate that bagel, right? So, some people become insulin resistant, it takes more insulin to do that same job.

On the flip side, if you go long at like long hours and hours and hours between meals, you do that consistently. You don't eat till way late in the day and your blood sugar is low and it's staying low, then that means that your glucagon is having to work hard and work overtime. What happens typically, though, is that we're not always starving ourselves. We typically are over eating the wrong foods that is causing this spike in our glucose and the spike in our insulin as a response to that overabundance of glucose that we're taking in.

So, we are forcing these two hormones to keep us in the center of the stream, right? So you go to the right, too much sugar, insulin kicks in kicks you back into the center of the stream, you wait too long in between meals, you start to hit the left bank, and glucagon kicks in and tries to keep you in the center.

Now there is a sweet spot, there is an ideal range of where our blood sugar should be if we were to measure it, and that is between 80 to 120 milligrams per deciliter. So, if you had your blood drawn and say you were doing whether you're fasting or not, we ideally want our blood sugar to be in that range. And what happens is that when we go too long between meals and our blood sugar drops--

so say that's first thing in the morning fasting. First thing in the morning our blood sugar is definitely low as it should be, we haven't eaten anything for 8, 10, 12 hours. But then we eat something that maybe is not good for us, and that our blood sugar will spike, right. So, what we want to do, though, we want to keep it in between 80 and 120 mg/dL, all day long. And there are ways that we can do that, that I will get to in just a little bit.

But first, I'd like to talk about a test. How do you know if you are pre-diabetic? And there are many simple tests available through your physician, of course, one is just a simple blood test. It's and it measures A1C. So that is a fasting blood sugar level, which is between 100 to 125 milligrams per deciliter. And that is considered pre-diabetes when you are when you fall within that range. And sometimes that is also called impaired fasting glucose, and then a fasting blood sugar level of 126 milligrams per deciliter or above indicates type two diabetes. And it's not that if you go into the pre-diabetic mode, you can't change that. It's likely that you can if you really take control over your diet, it is not too late if you fall into that pre-diabetic category already.

The bottom line here is we need to be kind to our pancreas. So how do we do that? And one thing that I can recommend when I say eat like a diabetic, so you don't become one is just eat small meals that are balanced in macronutrients and macronutrients. When I say that I'm referring to lean proteins, complex carbohydrates, and healthy fats. And then also I would minimize any carbohydrate that is unhealthy for you, like white rice, anything that's been stripped of the fiber, also any sugars, alcohol, that kind of thing.

So, I'd like to talk about the glycemic index that we've all heard of, you know, if sugar is considered to be 100 on a scale of zero to 100 being the highest on the glycemic index, it's kind of like a benchmark. And then everything like bananas are kind of up there and fruits, things like that have higher glycemic index, but they are still healthy for you. And that's the thing I'd like to share with you is because just because something has a high glycemic index does not mean it's not good for you. It really depends. So, the food quality is very important, but then how we combine it with other foods is equally important. The concept of glycemic loading is really important. Say for example, you're hungry and you eat an apple and that is just a pure carbohydrate, but it is good for you. It is loaded with fiber and

vitamins, and you eat that apple but your body breaks it down pretty quickly, because it is just a carbohydrate. Not only in this situation does your blood sugar spike and insulin kicks in, but unfortunately, you're also hungry in an hour because you just didn't combine your foods, right?

The concept of glycemic load has to do with combining your foods, the right quality foods in the right combinations so you stay fuller longer and you regulate your blood sugar. And frankly, I have practiced this for over 10 years. And my blood sugar is so even and it makes me feel so good. I don't have the highs anymore. I don't have the lows anymore. I'm just my body is just regulated. So, I'm being as kind to my pancreas as I possibly can.

Here's an example for you. You take that same apple, and then you add say 10 almonds to it which are your healthy fats. So you've started out with your complex carbohydrate, which is the apple you add, say 10 almonds, which is your healthy fat and has a little bit of protein in it, but I really would put it more in the healthy fat category, and then we're going to add to it some lean protein. I'm just going to use my imagination and say okay, we're going to add two egg whites. So here we have your lean protein, which is the egg white, the complex carbohydrate, which is the apple and the healthy fat, which are your almonds, right? So you've taken a meal and instead of just eating the carbohydrate, you have balanced out your blood sugar because this is going to take longer to metabolize. Because you have balanced everything properly. You've combined the right macronutrients into more of a meal and I like to look at meals rather than snacks. A snack to me is you eat one or two things in a very, very small proportion. And a meal is when you are combining these foods so that you not only is it balanced from a nutrient standpoint, but it's also macronutrient balanced for your blood sugar. And here you are being kind to your pancreas.

And I will share with you now, how I balanced my meals I beat I make this special practice, regardless of whether I'm eating at home, or maybe at those rare occasions when I'm at a restaurant, which is like never lately, because we've been sheltering in place, can't say that I miss them. I have to say that I am loving my home cooking and my control over the quality of foods that I'm eating way more than dining out at a restaurant. So I think that's a great thing.

Here's how to balance your macros. This is what I do from a nutritional standpoint, is I start with a lean protein. All right, so that could be anything from some egg whites or chicken breast, pork tenderloin, tilapia, so any kind of like fish, white fish, lean ground turkey, and those kinds of foods. And you add a complex carbohydrate and complex carbohydrates with the things like fruits and vegetables, some of your starchy vegetables like yams and sweet potatoes.

You could do quinoa, brown rice and those sorts of things as well as all of your fruits and vegetables. And then you can add healthy fats and healthy fats would include things like avocado, which are amazing. I love avocados, they are so high in fiber, and healthy fat high in Omega-3's, so they're really good for you too. You could also have olive oil or walnuts, almonds, those kinds of foods also fit into your healthy fat category.

And what I like to do is I have a 3-2-1 approach, which is pretty easy to remember, if you can, count backwards from three, we can all do that! Right. So what I like to do is I start with my lean protein, and this is the ratio for you. If you're say a 140 pound woman, this would work for you. If you're a 200 pound guy, you're gonna want to double it. Okay, so 3-2-1. So, you we start with our lean protein and I do about three ounces and then I add two cups of vegetables, or complex carbohydrates. And those could include vegetables, which are about 50 calories per cup, or it could be whole grains. So maybe I'll do one and a half cups of some green vegetable, or maybe one cup of broccoli and a half cup of sweet potato, and then a half cup of brown rice or quinoa.

I will blend it so that I get a combination in variety and colors. And with the grains they are four times more calorie dense than vegetables. So, I do think that they're very important and very healthy for people. But I also think that smaller quantities are better for us when it comes to looking at trying to get as much nutrition into our meals and into our bodies as we can. Then the one part the 3-2-1, the one in that 3-2-1, is one tablespoon of healthy fat. So that could be perhaps a quarter or an eighth of an avocado. It could be the olive oils to top it off. So here we have this beautiful blend of our lean protein, our complex carbohydrates and our healthy fats.

And when you eat this way, your blood sugar will balance, you will stay full for hours and hours and hours. And your body will just feel good. You won't be

grazing, you won't be you won't have the highs, you won't have the lows. You won't get that three o'clock in the afternoon, drowsy, lethargic, you know, I want to take a nap sort of feeling when you're balancing out your macros, and you're getting the calories that you need, and the nutrition that you need to get through your day.

So, what are the ways we can spike it? We can do the opposite. We can do things like eat one apple, we can eat processed food, white products, and just that so say you had a Twinkie or something like that. I don't know what do kids eat these days that are not good for us? A bagel, cookies, sugar, anything like that.

Now let's talk about why we get into these situations to begin with why we're eating processed foods, why we are making substandard food choices when we ideally, we know I mean, we all know what to do. And I'm guilty of this too sometimes I don't always eat exactly the way that I know I should be eating. And the bottom line is, you know, I guess lack of planning is one thing. But sometimes when we are not eating the way that we should, our body wants to compensate for it, right? When our blood sugar is low, we tend to want to self-medicate and eat those things that we know that our bodies know intuitively will metabolize really quickly. It's just like when people that have really low blood sugar, they'll just need to eat something sweet immediately because they know it'll bring it back up to where they need to be because at some level, our bodies can also be in danger. And when our blood sugar is too low, we will eat almost anything as long as it helps us maintain that blood sugar and bring that blood sugar back up again. Now I know what our blood sugar is low that it forces us to do things or eat foods that are self-medicating that will help bring our blood sugar up as soon as possible.

Have you ever paid \$21 for a hot dog? I know that sounds crazy, but a long time ago-- it was in 1986 to be exact--I paid \$9 for a hot dog, which is equivalent to about \$21 today. Now why would I do that? Was I out of my mind? Do I have more money than I have time? No. But I was 28 years old. And I was absolutely famished. My blood sugar was so low. And my husband and I were on this very low budget cruise. It was a Carnival Cruise. It was what we could afford at the time. And we were dropped off for the day at this beautiful island called Martinique or Barbados. And we walked around for hours and hours and my

blood sugar was dropping by the minute. It was hot and we had no water and there wasn't a restaurant or grocery store or anything in sight.

We're walking with this other couple that I didn't really know. And finally, I spotted someplace where they were selling food, it was just this little shack. And I just knew that I would just eat anything at that point because my blood sugar was so low. I just and I couldn't even stand hot dogs at all, but that's what they had. So the guy in the shack had me over a barrel and he knew it. He saw me coming from about a mile away literally because the reason I was so hungry is that I was about seven months pregnant. This story illustrates the nature of just how our bodies work. You know, my body was trying to protect this little baby and super low on calories. And on this cruise ship, I actually a pregnant woman I actually lost five pounds in about nine days being on this cruise ship because they didn't have these huge smorgasbords and buffets and things like that that they had in their brochures. It was only at midnight, the night before we disembarked to head back home that they actually had this beautiful buffet of available. And otherwise it was just you know; they'll give you a cheeseburger and I was lucky to get half of a slice of cheese on my cheeseburger. That's how skimpy it was back at that time. So no, I've never been on a cruise since then. And no, I have never been on Carnival again. It was just not a great experience.

And the other side of that is the, the captain drove the ship into the dock and it created this huge hole in the side of the ship that you could basically drive a car through. So, we were stranded on this island for quite some time while they were trying to make repairs so we could set out to see again.

So, this is just what our bodies do. Like we go into this mode of survival. When our blood sugar is low, our bodies just go on this high alert, and we just need food and then at that point in time, it's a little bit late to be able to make those really healthy food choices. So that survival mechanism just drives us to eat whatever we can. And you know how that is maybe you come home from work or you're out all day and you haven't had a chance to eat or maybe had something light and you're just starving. Are you going to go refrigerator and make yourself a big salad and grill some salmon and like make this amazing meal? Probably not, you'll probably go for the tortilla chips because that's what's available right now and your body needs something right now. That's a state that we put ourselves in,



which is really unfortunate. So, I would just ask you to be kind to your pancreas and balance your macronutrients. Think, and remember 3-2-1, three ounces, two cups, one tablespoon, okay, and if you're a guy, you can double that easily.

So, thank you for listening. I hope all this helps and that you and your family stay safe and healthy. I hope this gives you some food for thought. And be sure to subscribe and check out [ToniJulian.com](https://tonijulian.com) for more podcasts, blogs resources and Toni's Protein Meals® to keep you healthy and strong, and these are balanced macros, by the way friends.

From my heart to yours until next time, bye-bye.

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