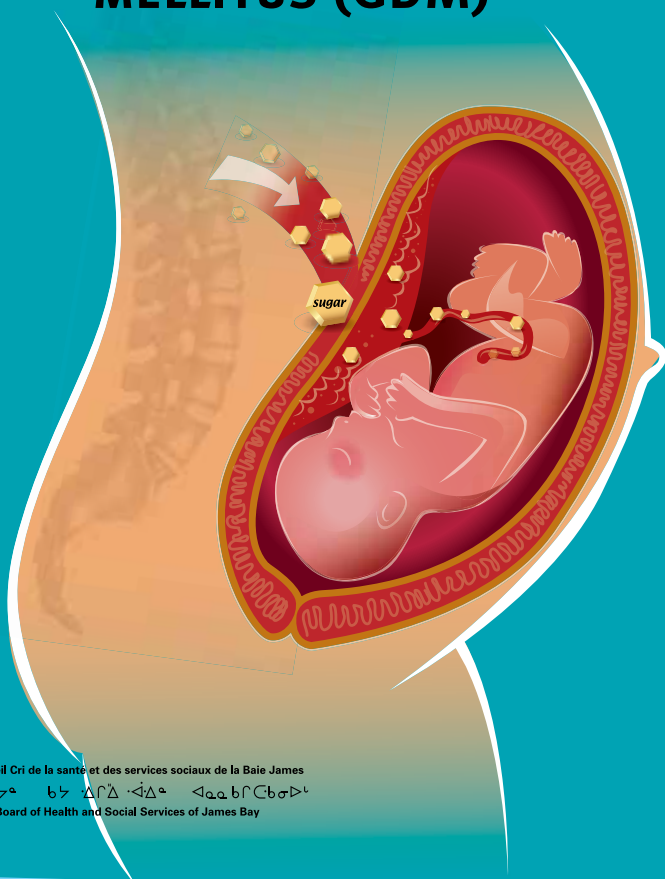


WHAT IS GDM?

A GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING GESTATIONAL DIABETES MELLITUS (GDM)



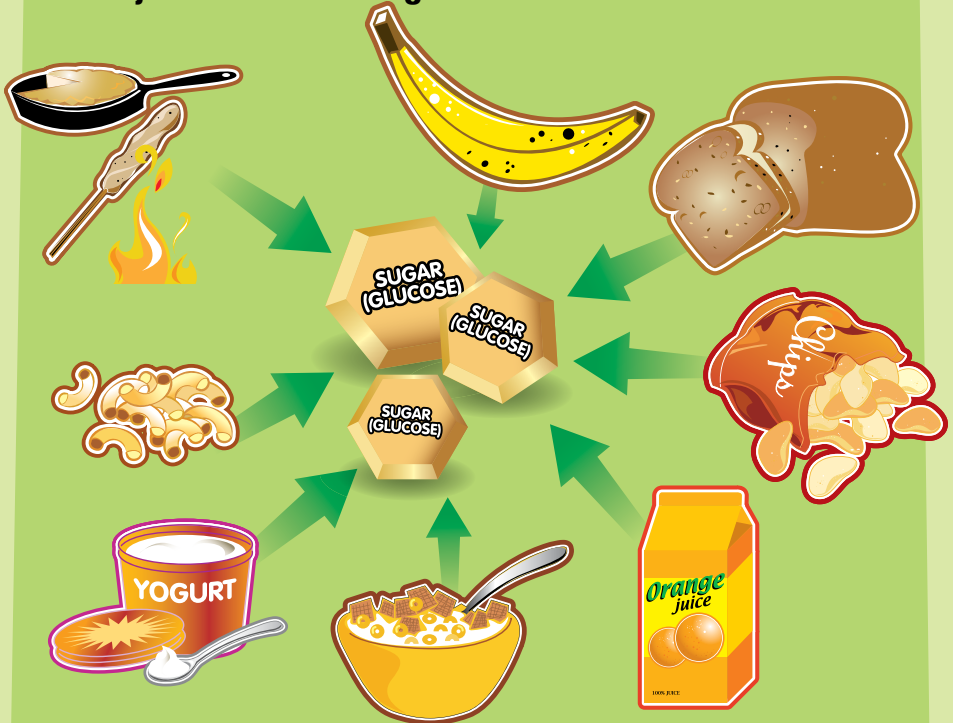
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Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay

FOODS THAT CONTAIN SUGAR

In this booklet, when we talk about blood sugar (glucose), we mean the kind of sugar found inside our body.

Blood sugar (glucose) comes from most of the food we eat.

Not just sweet tasting foods.



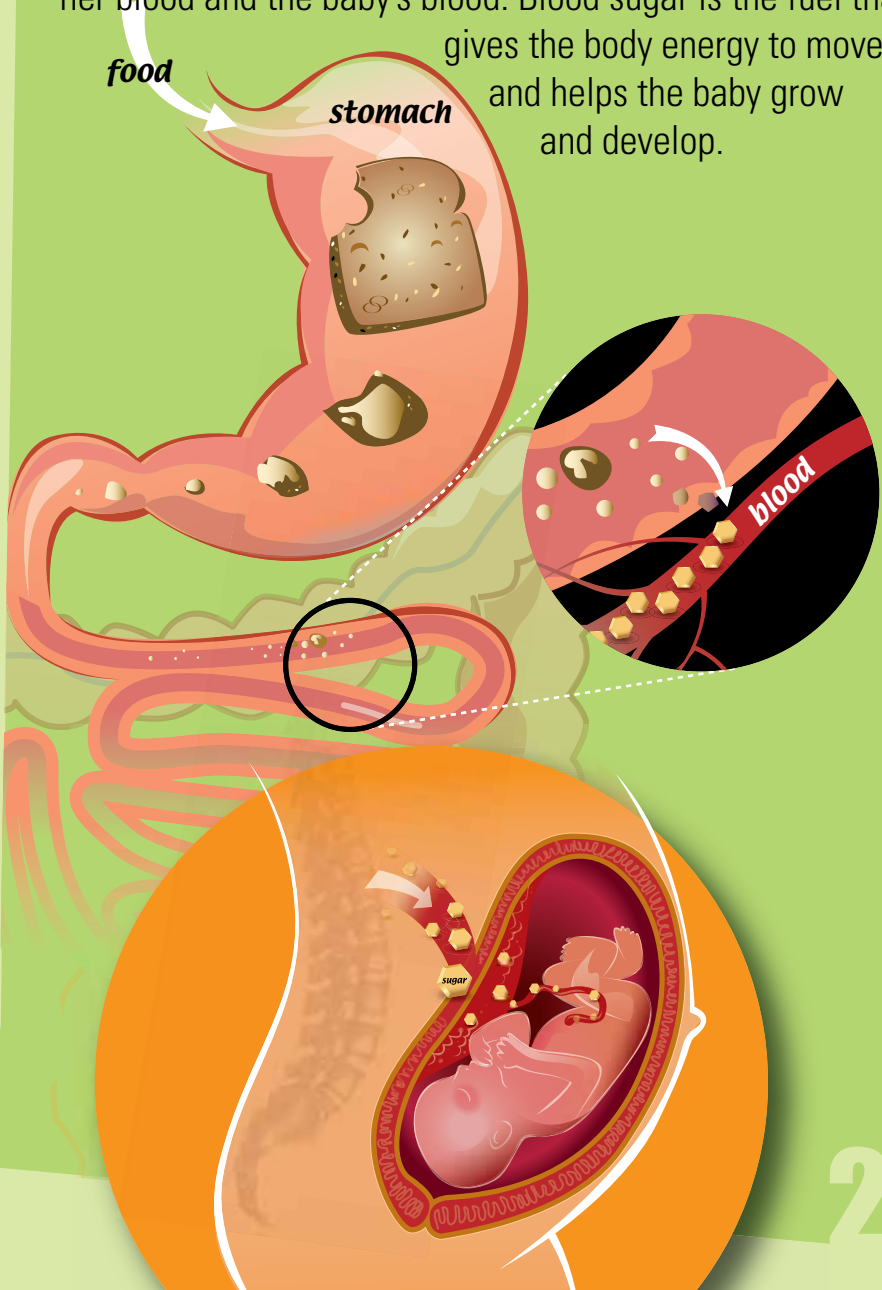
Foods that contain sugar are:

- Anything made of flour (bannock, bread, pasta,...)
- Rice, potatoes, corn and cereals
- Fruits and fruit juices
- Milk and yogurt
- Desserts and sweets (including sweet drinks)

Meat, fish, eggs and cheese do not contain sugar.

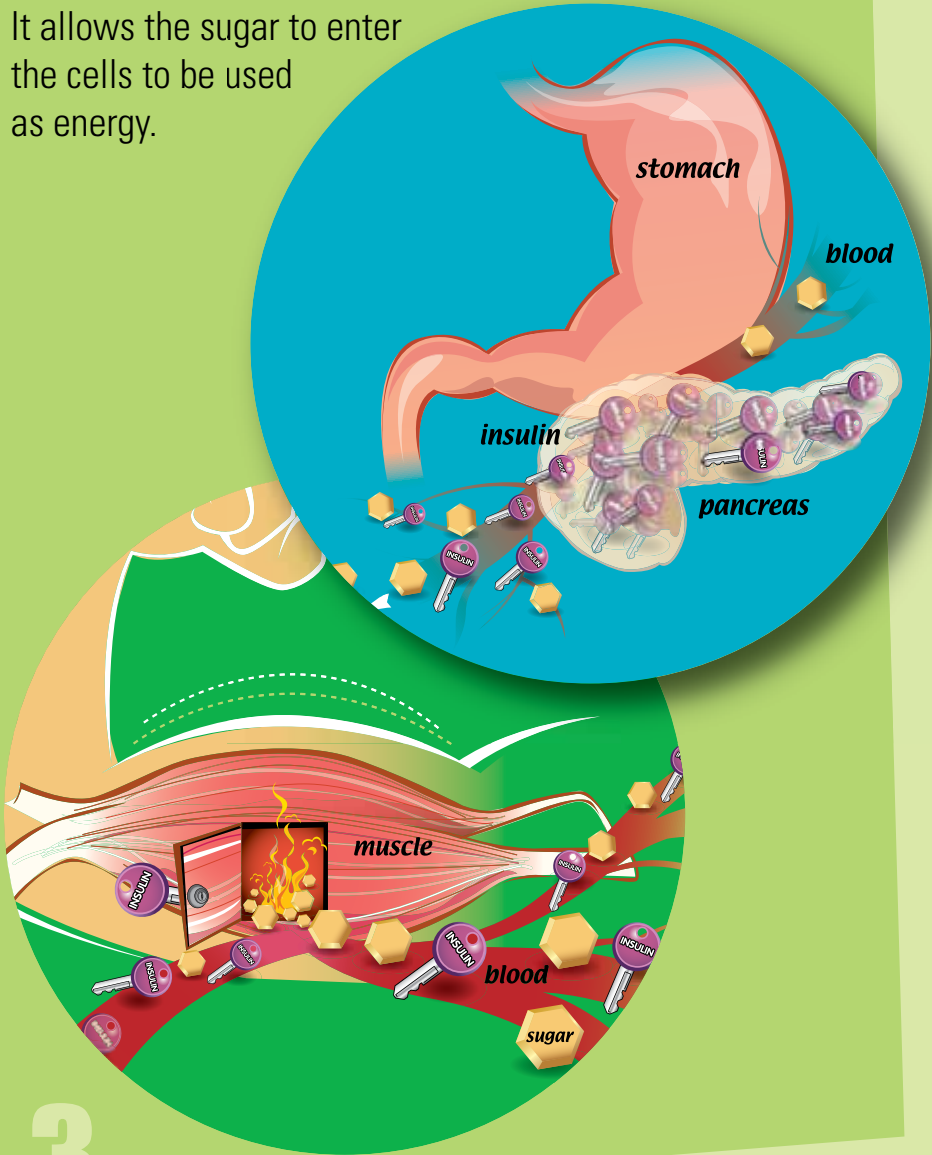
HOW THE BODY WORKS DURING PREGNANCY

When the mother eats, the sugar from the food goes into her blood and the baby's blood. Blood sugar is the fuel that gives the body energy to move and helps the baby grow and develop.



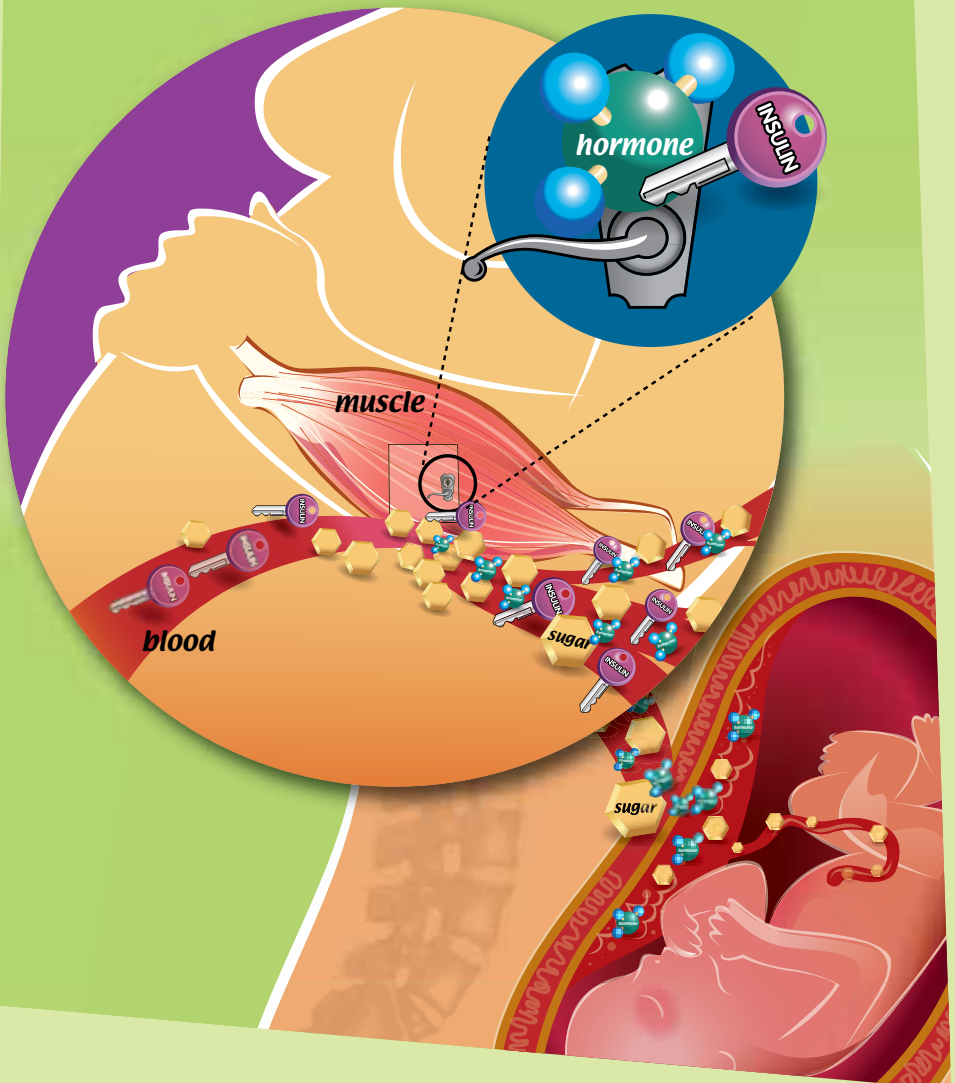
HOW THE BODY WORKS

To get the sugar out of the blood and into the different parts of the body, we need a key. The key is called insulin. Insulin is made by the pancreas when we eat. It allows the sugar to enter the cells to be used as energy.



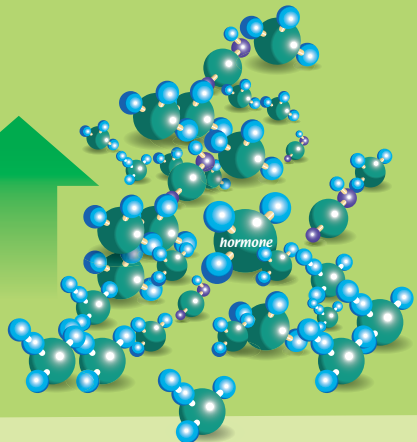
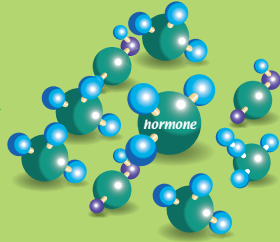
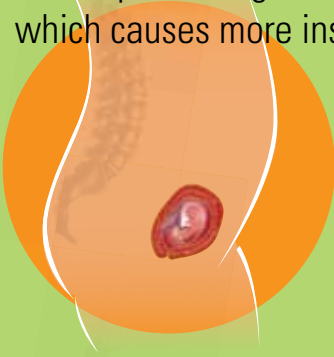
HOW THE BODY WORKS DURING PREGNANCY

During ALL pregnancies, the placenta makes a hormone called human placental lactogen (HPL) which allows the baby to grow and develop. This hormone also blocks the normal action of the mother's insulin. This is called insulin resistance.



HOW THE BODY WORKS DURING PREGNANCY

As the placenta grows, more of this hormone is produced which causes more insulin resistance.



WHAT IS GDM

GDM develops when the mother's pancreas cannot make enough insulin. Her blood sugar will rise above normal levels because of insulin resistance.

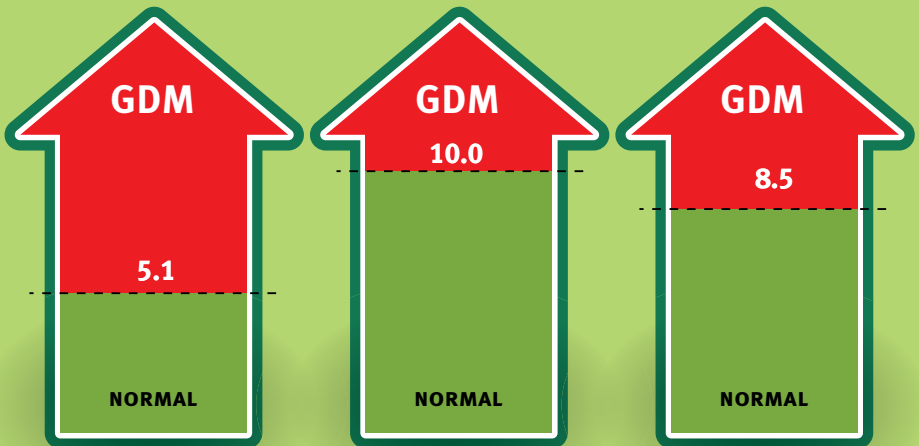
To make sure the mother produces enough insulin, she will be tested between the 22nd and the 28th week of pregnancy. This test is called 75g (sweet drink).

Women who had diabetes before pregnancy don't need this test.

**FASTING
BLOOD SUGAR**

**1 HR AFTER
DRINKING A
SWEET DRINK
AT THE CLINIC (75g)**

**2 HOURS AFTER
DRINKING A
SWEET DRINK
AT THE CLINIC (75g)**



KEEP A HEALTHY BLOOD SUGAR DURING GDM

Keeping blood sugar at normal level during pregnancy will reduce the risk of several complications for the mother and the baby.

These complications include:

- Mother having infections, high blood pressure, or early labour.
- Baby having low blood sugar at birth, or other health problems (breathing problems, infections, etc.).
- Baby growing too much; large babies can get injured or have a difficult delivery and might need a caesarean section.



DID YOU KNOW

- Mothers who had GDM are more at risk of developing diabetes in the years following the pregnancy.
- Taking care of the mother's blood sugar will help baby be born at a healthy weight and prevent diabetes later in life.

HOW TO KEEP BLOOD SUGAR HEALTHY

Be active every day

Aim for a healthy weight gain

Choose healthy food

Spread food evenly throughout the day

Take a small healthy bedtime snack

If needed, take insulin as prescribed



INSULIN

Eating healthy food at regular hours and doing physical activity may not be enough to keep the mother's blood sugar at a normal level. Insulin may be needed at bedtime and/or mealtime.

Insulin is safe for the baby, but **high blood sugar is not.**



ALSO, FOR A HEALTHY BABY...

- Take 5mg folic acid 3 months before pregnancy and until the 12th week of pregnancy.
- Take 1 maternal multivitamin every day for the whole pregnancy.
- Stay away from alcohol and drugs.
- Choose smoke-free environments.

AFTER DELIVERY...

For most women with GDM, blood sugar levels return to normal after the baby is born.

It is important for the mother to get a blood test when the baby is 6 weeks old, and again every year.

If diabetes does not go away after the baby is born, it is possible that she already had diabetes before her pregnancy and was never diagnosed.



DID YOU KNOW

- Keeping a healthy lifestyle after giving birth will help the mother lose weight and may prevent diabetes later in life.
- Breastfeeding helps prevent obesity and diabetes later in life for the baby.

**REGULAR FOLLOW UPS WITH THE HEALTHCARE TEAM
WILL HELP THE MOTHER ADJUST LIFESTYLE HABITS AND
MEDICATION MAKING IT EASIER TO CONTROL BLOOD SUGAR.**



FOR QUESTIONS, CONTACT YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM:

Prepared by:

Public Health Department

Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay

Tel.: 418-923-3355



Conseil Cri de la santé et des services sociaux de la Baie James

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