

# WHAT IS THE 3-HOUR GLUCOSE TOLERANCE TEST?

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The 3-hour glucose tolerance test evaluates how your body processes sugar and determines if you have gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy). This diagnostic test is typically recommended if your 1-hour glucose screening results are abnormal. The test involves drinking a glucose solution and taking blood samples at specific intervals to measure blood sugar levels.

## HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE TEST:

- **Maintain Your Normal Diet:** Eat as you normally would leading up to the day of the test. Avoid making significant changes to your diet.
- **Fast Before the Test:** Do not eat, drink (except plain water), smoke, or exercise for 8-12 hours before the test. Fasting ensures accurate results.
- **Plan for the Time Commitment:** The test will take approximately four hours. While you wait in the lab, bring a book, podcast, or project to pass the time.
- **Bring Water and a Snack:** You may drink plain water during the test, so bring a water bottle if desired. After the test, you may feel hungry, so consider bringing a light snack to eat afterward.

## WHAT TO EXPECT DURING THE TEST:

- **Fasting Blood Draw:** A blood sample will be taken to measure your fasting blood sugar level.
- **Drinking the Glucose Solution:** You will drink 8 oz of a glucose solution containing 100 grams of sugar. This must be consumed within 5 minutes.
- **Timed Blood Draws:** Additional blood samples will be taken 1 hour, 2 hours, and 3 hours after consuming the glucose solution. These samples will indicate how your body processes sugar over time.
- **Remaining in the Lab:** To ensure accurate results, you must remain in the lab for the entire duration of the test. Physical activity during this time may interfere with the results.

## IMPORTANT NOTES:

- **Stay Hydrated:** You may drink plain water during the test.
- **Avoid Physical Activity:** Any activity can interfere with test results, so remain seated or at rest throughout the testing period.
- **Resume Normal Eating:** You can eat and drink as usual after the test.

## NORMAL RESULTS AND DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA:

Gestational diabetes is usually diagnosed when two or more of your test results are elevated beyond the following levels:

- Fasting: Less than 95 mg/dL
- 1 Hour: Less than 180 mg/dL
- 2 Hours: Less than 155 mg/dL
- 3 Hours: Less than 140 mg/dL

If your results indicate gestational diabetes, your healthcare provider will explain the next steps and work with you to develop a management plan tailored to your needs.

Remember, gestational diabetes is not a reflection of something you did wrong. Hormonal changes during pregnancy can cause this condition, and with proper care, most women go on to have healthy pregnancies and babies.

Understanding the purpose and process of the 3-hour glucose tolerance test can help you approach it with confidence and preparedness. If you have any additional questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at 262-544-4411.