

# The best teas to improve blood sugar

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If you live with diabetes, you probably spend a lot of time planning what goes into your daily diet. But drinks are easy to overlook. Remember that they can also have a big impact on your blood sugar levels. On the other hand, not drinking enough water can also be a problem, as dehydration can contribute to high blood sugar levels.



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With so many teas to choose from, you may be wondering which one is best for diabetics. Here are the answers from nutritionists.

## Green tea

Green tea is elegant, earthy, and has been linked to a variety of health benefits, including improved blood sugar control. In fact, research has found that it can help lower fasting blood sugar levels and improve insulin sensitivity in people with diabetes. What makes it so effective? ' *The gut contains trillions of bacteria that influence blood sugar* ,' says Kimberley Rose-Francis, RDN, CDCES, LD, a registered dietitian and certified diabetes educator in Florida. ' *An imbalance in gut bacteria can lead to impaired glucose tolerance and insulin resistance. Green tea is rich in polyphenols, which are small plant-based compounds that have been linked to a variety of health benefits, including improved gut health.* '



## **Black tea**

Although green tea and black tea look and taste quite different, they both come from the *Camellia sinensis* plant. So it makes sense that they offer many of the same health benefits, including better blood sugar support. While there isn't much research on the benefits of black tea for blood sugar control, one review study reported that it may aid glucose metabolism and improve the body's sensitivity to insulin. Researchers aren't sure exactly why. However, they note that the polyphenols abundant in black tea may slow the digestion and absorption of sugar from food. In turn, this may protect against weight gain, a strong contributor to type 2 diabetes.

## **Ginger tea**

*'Ginger is well known for its ability to relieve nausea, but it can also help improve blood sugar levels when crushed and brewed into a fragrant tea,' says Rose-Francis. 'Research shows that ginger contains nearly 40 antioxidant compounds, which may be beneficial for treating a variety of inflammatory conditions and may have a positive effect on blood sugar levels over time.'*

*'Since chronically elevated blood sugar levels can lead to inflammation, ginger's anti-inflammatory compounds could be considered a beneficial functional food for achieving better blood sugar balance,' she adds. In addition to ginger's anti-inflammatory properties, this flavorful root may also help inhibit carbohydrate absorption, regulate glucose metabolism, and protect the insulin-producing cells of the pancreas.*

## **Cinnamon tea**

Cinnamon isn't just a beloved baking spice. It can also be brewed into a delicious tea. *"Cinnamon has been studied for its potential benefits in enhancing insulin function and supporting blood sugar levels,"* says Vandana Sheth, RDN, CDCES, FAND, a registered dietitian and certified diabetes educator specializing in plant-based nutrition. *"It's a naturally sweet tea with no added sugar and is a good option for people with diabetes."* Like ginger, cinnamon is rich in antioxidants that help address chronic inflammation that can make it difficult to

control your blood sugar. In fact, some studies have shown that cinnamon powder can help lower blood sugar in people with and without diabetes. And an older study found that cinnamon tea may help lower blood sugar in people without diabetes.

You can easily make a cup of tea by steeping cinnamon in water. Or, if you're craving a soothing sensation, combine it with black tea and other spices in a cup of tea.



## Turmeric tea

From better brain health to a reduced risk of heart disease, turmeric boasts a wide range of health benefits. Research shows that it can also lower blood sugar levels and help with weight control.

What makes it so powerful? Turmeric contains an active compound called curcumin, which is a powerful anti-inflammatory and antioxidant. And, as you may know, inflammation and high blood sugar often go hand in hand. It's no surprise that researchers credit curcumin's blood sugar-controlling power to its anti-inflammatory effects.

While you can always make a simple turmeric tea bag, there are all sorts of creative ways to use it. You can add a little honey to sweeten it up, but feel free to skip it for a sugar-free, blood sugar-friendly drink.

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