Preparing for the Breakfast Tolerance Test

In spite of the flaws with the test itself, one, two, and three hour breakfast tolerance tests are all used to screen for diabetes in pregnancy. The actual criteria, timing of the test, and the amount of glucose used varies across the country.

They all require a 12 hour fast, during which water is permitted. For three days before the test, the women should eat extra complex carbohydrates (150 gms. daily of whole grains, beans, vegetable starches like potatoes, etc.) to fortify her glycogen reserves. This prepares the body to tolerate the concentrated glucose load required for the test. Many practitioners assume that women are getting large amounts of carbohydrates and do not mention this necessary prerequisite to an accurate test. If carbohydrate loading isn’t done properly the test results are invalid and usually reflect starvation diabetes. She should also eliminate all refined carbohydrates and processed foods for at least a week before the test. If she doesn’t, a poor diet combined with carbohydrate loading may cause her results to be sky high! Try to eliminate any other conditions that may alter results as well.

Women should walk for at least 15 minutes before the fasting level is drawn and for 45 minutes between each sample after she ingests the breakfast.

Menu for the 75 gram Breakfast Tolerance Test

2 slices whole-wheat toast OR 1 whole English muffin
1 Tbsp. jam
1 6oz container light fruit yogurt
1 egg