



Hypoglycemia (Low Blood Glucose)

Hypoglycemia is a condition characterized by abnormally low blood glucose (blood sugar) levels, usually less than 70mg/dl. However, it is important to talk to your health care provider about your individual blood glucose targets, and what level is too low for you.

Hypoglycemia may also be referred to as an insulin reaction, or insulin shock.

Hypoglycemic symptoms are important clues that you have low blood glucose. Each person's reaction to hypoglycemia is different, any or all of the noted symptoms may be present.

The only sure way to know whether an individual is experiencing hypoglycemia is to check the blood glucose, if possible. If symptoms are present and there is no meter to check blood glucose, treat for hypoglycemia. Severe hypoglycemia has the potential to cause accidents, injuries, coma, and death.

Signs and Symptoms of Hypoglycemia (happen quickly)

- Shakiness
- Nervousness or anxiety
- Sweating, chills and clamminess
- Irritability or impatience
- Confusion, including delirium
- Rapid/fast heartbeat
- Lightheadedness or dizziness
- Hunger and nausea
- Sleepiness
- Blurred/impaired vision
- Tingling or numbness in the lips or tongue
- Headaches
- Weakness or fatigue
- Anger, stubbornness, or sadness
- Lack of coordination

Treatment

1. Consume 15-20 grams of glucose or simple carbohydrates
2. Recheck blood glucose after 15 minutes
3. If unable to recheck, assess whether symptoms are continuing or resolved
4. If hypoglycemia continues, repeat.

5. Once blood glucose returns to normal, eat a small snack if your next planned meal or snack is more than an hour or two away.

Examples of 15 grams of simple carbohydrates include:

- glucose tablets (follow package instructions)
- gel tube (follow package instructions)
- 2 tablespoons of raisins
- 4 ounces (1/2 cup) of juice or regular soda (not diet)
- 1 tablespoon sugar, honey, or corn syrup
- 8 ounces of nonfat or 1% milk
- hard candies, jellybeans, or gumdrops (see package to determine how many to consume)
- 15 skittles

Severe Hypoglycemia

- Change in level of consciousness or loss of consciousness
 - Seizure
1. Always assume as diabetic presenting with these symptoms is suffering from severe hypoglycemia and immediately delegate a call to EMS
 2. If the individual is able to swallow, administer glucose gel by mouth
 3. If the individual has glucagon on site, and you are trained to administer glucagon, defer to glucagon protocol.
 4. If the individual does not have glucagon and is unable to swallow, assess for pulse and respirations, administer CPR for absent breath or pulse until EMS arrives.