

References

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Stop Hypoglycemia

Hypoglycemia, or low blood sugar, is a serious concern in type 1 and type 2 diabetes. It is important to prevent, recognize, and treat hypoglycemia quickly to avoid harm and relieve symptoms. If not treated properly, severe hypoglycemia can lead to coma and death.



Signs of Hypoglycemia



Hunger



Upset Stomach



Cold Sweats



Feeling Cranky or Nervous



Tingling Skin or Numbness



Feeling Shaky or Weak



Headache



Unclear Thinking



Pounding Heartbeat



Passing Out



Impaired Vision

You might have some, or none, of these symptoms. Confirm hypoglycemia using a fingerstick glucose test. A reading below 4 mmol/L means you are experiencing hypoglycemia.

If testing is not immediately possible, treat first, and then test.

↑ **Hyperglycemia** =

a blood sugar level that is too high

↓ **Hypoglycemia** =

a blood sugar level that is too low

Treatment

- Take 15 to 20 grams of glucose.
- Wait 15 minutes and do a fingerstick glucose test.

If the blood glucose level is okay (more than 4.0 mmol/L), eat a recovery snack or the next planned meal if it's less than an hour away.

If the blood glucose level is still not okay (below 4.0 mmol/L), take another 15 to 20 grams of glucose and repeat above steps.

In severe cases, you may lose consciousness. Make sure your friends, family, and co-workers know what to do. Instruct them to call for medical help and to give you glucagon if you carry a glucagon kit. Make sure they know **not to** give you insulin if you have hypoglycemia, because that will make it worse.

Examples of 15 Grams of Glucose

- Glucose tablets (usually 4; read package to see how many)
- 3 packets (3 teaspoons) of table sugar dissolved in water
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of juice or regular soft drink (not diet)
- 1 tablespoon of honey

Note: Glucose or sucrose tablets or solution work faster and therefore are preferable to orange juice and glucose gels. Avoid foods high in fat, such as brownies, because fat slows down sugar absorption.

Examples of Good Recovery Snacks

- 7 whole grain crackers with 1 ounce of cheese or 2 tablespoons of peanut butter
- 7 baby carrots with 2 tablespoons of hummus
- 1 medium apple or orange with 1 to 2 tablespoons of nuts
- Half of a turkey or peanut butter sandwich

Note: The snack should contain complex carbohydrates and protein. Including some fat is fine.

Prevention

Look for the cause, so you can prevent hypoglycemia from happening again. If you have a history of hypoglycemia, you may benefit from more frequent fingerstick glucose testing. Eat regular meals with a balance of complex carbohydrates, proteins, and fats, which absorb more slowly than simple sugars. Do not consume alcohol on an empty stomach. Check blood sugar levels before, during, and after intense physical activity.