

Understanding Hypoglycemia Signs & Symptoms

Hypoglycemia is when the sugar (glucose) level in the blood is too low. Symptoms of low blood sugar may include:

Feeling:	Having:	Having Trouble With:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hungry • Worried or nervous (anxious) • Sweaty and clammy • Confused • Dizzy • Sleepy • Sick to your stomach (nauseous) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fast heartbeat • A headache • A change in your vision • Jerky movements that you cannot control (seizure) • Nightmares • Tingling or no feeling (numbness) around the mouth, lips, or tongue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking • Paying attention (concentrating) • Moving (coordination) • Sleeping • Shaking • Passing out (fainting) • Getting upset easily (irritability)

Low blood sugar can happen to people who have diabetes as well as those who do not have diabetes. Low blood sugar can happen quickly, and it can be an emergency

TREATING LOW BLOOD SUGAR

Low blood sugar is often treated by eating or drinking something sugary right away. If you can think clearly and swallow safely, follow the 15:15 rule:

- Take 15 grams of a fast-acting carb (carbohydrate). Some fast-acting carbs are:
 - 1 tube of glucose gel
 - 3 sugar tablets (glucose pills)
 - 6–8 pieces of hard candy
 - 4 oz (1/2 glass) of fruit juice
 - 4 oz (1/2 glass) of regular (not diet) soda
- Check your blood sugar 15 minutes after you take the carb, if able:
 - If your blood sugar is still at or below 70 (mg/dL) , take 15 grams of a carb again.
 - If your blood sugar does not go above 70 (mg/dL) after 3 tries, get help right away
 - After your blood sugar goes back to normal, eat a meal or a snack within 1 hour.

TREATING VERY LOW BLOOD SUGAR

If your blood sugar is at or below 54 (mg/dL) you have very low blood sugar (severe hypoglycemia), which is an emergency. Do not wait to see if the symptoms will go away. Call your hospice to get medical help right away.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. Clinical Pharmacology [database online]. Tampa, FL: Elsevier/Gold Standard, Inc.; 2017. Access 2017 Dec. Available from: <http://www.clinicalpharmacology.com>