

Treating Hypoglycemia (Low Blood Glucose) When You Have Diabetes

Hypoglycemia means that your blood sugar is low and your body, especially your brain, can't get enough fuel.

Low blood sugar can go low for many reasons including taking too much insulin, missing a meal, or taking too much of your other diabetes medicines.

The most important way to prevent low blood sugar is to test your blood sugar level often.

There are two tools you can use to read your blood sugar: a finger-stick test and a continuous glucose monitor, or "CGM."

When you have a CGM, you may still need to use a finger-stick test to confirm low-blood sugar.

If your blood sugar level drops below 70 milligrams per deciliter, you may feel tired, anxious, dizzy, weak, shaky, or sweaty. You may have a fast heartbeat or blurry vision.

Here's how to treat low blood sugar:

If you experience low blood sugar, eat 15 grams of carbohydrate. Wait 15 minutes, and check your blood sugar.

Foods that have 15 grams of carbohydrate include the following 3 to 4 glucose tablets, hard candy (such as 6 Life Savers), half cup cup of fruit juice or regular (not diet) soda, or 1 tablespoon of table sugar.

If your blood sugar is still low after you have eaten the carbohydrate snack, repeat these steps again.

Eat another 15 grams of carbohydrate.

Wait another 15 minutes, and check your blood sugar again. If it has come back into your target blood sugar range, eat your normal meals and snacks as planned.

If your blood sugar is still low, call your doctor right away.

You can ask your doctor to have glucagon medicine on hand for blood sugar emergencies.

Glucagon is a hormone that raises blood sugar levels quickly.

If you have problems with severe low blood sugar, talk with your doctor about having a family member or someone who is often with you to learn how to give glucagon if needed.

Glucagon should be given only in emergencies.

It can be stressful to think about hypoglycemia, but knowing what to do if you do go low, can help.

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