

Diabetes and Low Blood Sugar

What is low blood sugar (hypoglycemia—*hi-po-gly-SEE-mee-uh*) in a patient with diabetes?

Low blood sugar is when your blood sugar level drops below 70 mg/dL. Blood sugar below 70 mg/dL can harm you. Common causes of low blood sugar include:

- Skipping meals or eating too little
- Exercising more than usual
- Drinking alcohol
- Taking diabetes medicines at the wrong time or in the wrong amount

There are many signs of low blood sugar

Place a check mark next to the signs of low blood sugar that you have had in the past. How did you feel?

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hungry | <input type="checkbox"/> Blurry vision | <input type="checkbox"/> Weak or tired |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shaky | <input type="checkbox"/> Irritable, impatient, angry | <input type="checkbox"/> Confused |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nervous or anxious | <input type="checkbox"/> Sweaty, chilly, or clammy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heart beating fast | <input type="checkbox"/> Dizzy or light-headed | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

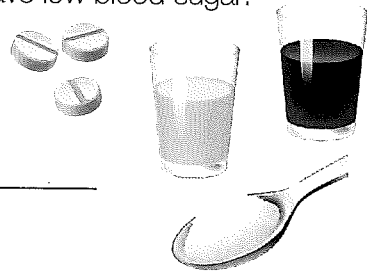
If you notice any of the signs above, check your blood sugar level

If your blood sugar is low, you should treat it right away. Severe low blood sugar can make you pass out or have a seizure.

Three steps to treating low blood sugar

1. Eat or drink some form of sugar (around 15 grams of carbohydrate) to raise your blood sugar quickly. Here's a list of foods and how much you should have to treat low blood sugar. Put a check mark next to the foods you plan to use the next time you have low blood sugar:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 glucose tablets | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 or 6 pieces of hard candy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1/2 cup (4 ounces) of fruit juice or regular soda | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 tablespoon of honey or corn syrup |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 tablespoon of sugar | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |



2. Wait 15 minutes.

3. Check your blood sugar again. REPEAT steps 1-3 until your blood sugar level is above 70 mg/dL.

- If these steps do not raise your blood sugar, call your healthcare provider right away
- Once your blood sugar is over 70 mg/dL, you may need to eat a snack if your next meal is over an hour away

If you need medical help right away, have someone call 911 or your local emergency number.

Healthcare Provider: _____ **Phone:** _____

If you have low blood sugar, talk to your healthcare provider about your diabetes management plan.



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This material was developed by GlaxoSmithKline.