

NUTRITION UPDATE

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HYPOGLYCEMIA (LOW BLOOD SUGAR LEVEL)

WHAT IS HYPOGLYCEMIA?

Hypoglycemia is a medical condition in which the blood glucose level drops below the normal range, typically lower than 70mg/dl. This usually occurs in patients suffering from diabetes and can be dangerous, if not treated promptly.

CAUSES OF HYPOGLYCEMIA

Hypoglycemia may be caused by a number of factors, including:

- A delay in taking a meal or skipping it
- Lack of carbohydrates in diet
- Unplanned or strenuous physical activity
- Taking excessive insulin or other glucose lowering drugs

EARLY SIGNS OF HYPOGLYCEMIA

The symptoms of low blood sugar vary from person to person. However, some common early signs include:

- Sweating
- Dizziness
- Irritability
- Feeling tired
- Rapid heartbeat
- Increased hunger
- Sleeping problems
- Light-headedness
- Trembling or feeling shaky

TREATMENT FOR HYPOGLYCEMIA

In case your blood sugar level is less than 70mg/dL or you have the above listed symptoms, you should do the following:

Step 1:

- Take a sugary drink such as fruit juice or non-diet fizzy drink. Alternatively, you can mix 3 teaspoons of sugar or honey in a glass of water and take that.

Step 2:

Test your blood sugar level in 10-15 minutes. If it is above the threshold, then move to step 3; otherwise, repeat step 1 and recheck your blood sugar again after a few minutes.

Step 3:

Eat a meal with a long acting carbohydrate such as bread, fruit, pasta or rice, with a glass of milk.

In case of severe hypoglycemia, call your doctor or visit the ER.



References:

<https://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au/hypoglycaemia>
<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/hypoglycaemia/Pages/Introduction.aspx>