

# High Blood Sugar

## (Hyperglycemia)



### Causes

High blood sugar (also called hyperglycemia) is when there is too much sugar in the blood. Over time, this can cause serious health problems.

#### High blood sugar can happen if you:

- Skip a dose of insulin or diabetes medication
- Eat more than your usual meal or snack
- Are less physically active than usual
- Are under stress or sick

### Prevention

- The best way to avoid high blood sugar is to follow your diabetes care plan
- Check your blood sugar regularly, and as advised by your doctor or diabetes care team

### Signs and symptoms

Here is what might happen when your blood sugar is high:



Very thirsty



Sleepy



Blurry vision



Very hungry



Need to urinate more than usual



Infections or injuries heal more slowly than usual

If high blood sugar is not treated, it can cause serious health problems. Hyperglycemia can damage the vessels that supply blood to vital organs, which can increase the risk of heart disease and stroke, kidney disease, vision problems, and nerve problems. If high blood sugar is a problem for you, talk to your doctor or diabetes care team.

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# Low Blood Sugar

(Hypoglycemia)



## Causes

You may get low blood sugar (also known as hypoglycemia) if you:

- Take certain medicines and eat too few carbohydrates, or skip or delay a meal
- Take too much insulin or diabetes medication
- Are more active than usual

## Signs and symptoms

When your blood sugar is low, you might feel:



Sweaty



Hungry



Dizzy



Shaky



Nervous or upset



Fast heart rate



Headache



Sudden behavior change



Weak or tired

If low blood sugar is not treated, it can become severe and cause you to pass out. If low blood sugar is a problem for you, talk to your doctor or diabetes care team.

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Continued on reverse →

# The Rule of 15

It is important to know if you have low blood sugar



1

## Check

Make sure to check your blood sugar right away if you have any symptoms of low blood sugar. If you think your blood sugar is low but cannot check it at the time, treat it anyway.

2

## Treat

You can treat low blood sugar by eating or drinking **15 grams** of carbohydrates, such as:

- 4 ounces (1/2 cup) of regular fruit juice (like orange, apple or grape juice)
- 4 ounces (1/2 cup) of regular soda pop (not diet)
- 3 or 4 glucose tablets
- 5 to 6 hard candies that you can chew quickly (such as mints)

3

## Wait

- Wait **15 minutes**, and then check your blood sugar again.
- If your blood sugar is still low, refer to step number 2 (Treat).
- Once your blood sugar returns to

normal, eat a snack (such as a small sandwich). This will help to keep your blood sugar stable.



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