

Hypoglycemia

Hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) occurs when your blood sugar is too low. The normal range for blood sugar is 70 to 140 mg/dl. If it drops below 70 mg/dl it may be considered low.

What Causes Hypoglycemia

- Skipping meals
- Changing your usual mealtimes
- Not eating enough
- Taking too much insulin or diabetes pills
- Exercising more than usual

Warning Signs

- Weakness
- Shakiness
- Irritability
- Numbness/tingling
- Sweatiness/clammy skin

Note: You may have one of the warning signs but not actually have low blood sugar. Symptoms may be triggered by a sharp drop in blood sugar. For example, your level may fall from 250 mg/dl to 150 mg/dl and you may experience some of the warning signs, even though you are

not below 70 mg/dl. These feelings will pass.

Treatment

❖ If you are diabetic, *test your blood sugar* immediately (if possible), if you have some of the symptoms of hypoglycemia.

❖ *Eat one of the following foods* if your blood sugar tests below 70 mg/dl:

- 1/2 cup fruit juice
- 1/2 cup soda (not diet)
- 3 glucose tablets
- 4 tsp. or packets of sugar in 1/2 cup of water
- 6-7 hard candies
- 10-12 raisins
- 8-10 jelly beans

❖ *If you do not feel better* in 15-20 minutes, eat the same amount as you did before, then add a snack, such as 1/2 a sandwich or a meal.

❖ *Nutrition plays a big role!* Try to gradually adopt these healthy habits:

- Have 6 small meals and snacks each day.

- Include protein (lean meat, poultry, low fat cheese) and some fat at each meal and snack.
- Avoid concentrated sweets like sugar, candy, jelly, syrup, cookies, soft drinks, pies and cakes.
- Eat smaller meals, more often. Snacks may be very helpful to provide a steady supply of blood sugar. Combine a quick source of blood sugar like fruit or juice, and a slow source such as cheese, meat, or other protein source.
- Avoid alcohol—it can lower your blood sugar.
- Eat more fiber (20-35 grams/day). Fiber is found in whole grain foods, fruits, vegetables, and beans and it helps control your blood sugar. *Note: With an increase in fiber, there must be an increase in fluids.*
- Exercise to control your weight. Attempt a minimum of 20-30 minutes, three days a week (working up to daily activity for 20-30 minutes).

(continued on reverse side.)

HYPOGLYCEMIA CONTINUED

CHOOSE

AVOID

BREADS & GRAINS

- Whole grain products such as whole wheat or whole grain flour, brown or wild rice, corn meal
- Whole grain cereals, hot or cold unsweetened cereals
- Whole wheat bread, rye, pumpernickel, French, tortillas, bagels, pita
- Whole wheat crackers, graham crackers, melba toast, rye krisp
- Popcorn

- Sugar-coated cereals with sugar-coated fruit or those with honey or syrup
- Sweet rolls, doughnuts, pastries

VEGETABLES

- Fresh, frozen or canned vegetables
- Starchy vegetables, like corn, peas, beans and potatoes

- Vegetables with sauces or glazes, sweet-n-sour vegetables
- Sweet pickles, relishes

FRUITS

- Fresh fruit
- Fruits canned or frozen in water or it's own juice
- Fruit juice or drinks without added sugar

- Glazed or candied fruit
- Fruits canned or frozen in syrup or sugar

MILK

- Low fat milk
- Yogurt (no sugar added)
- Ice milk or frozen yogurt, no sugar added

- Chocolate or other flavored milk, milkshakes
- Ice cream

MEATS

- Consume protein sources in moderation (4-8 ounces/day)

- Meats prepared with a sugar glaze or sweetened sauce

BEVERAGES

- Diet sodas, drinks sweetened with sugar substitutes, coffee or tea

- Sugar-sweetened sodas or other drinks
- Beer, wine, liquor

DESSERTS, SWEETS

- Sugar substitutes
- Artificially sweetened gelatin
- Jams, jellies made with sugar substitute

- Foods containing sugar-like preservatives, cakes, cookies
- Table sugar
- Regular or "lite" jam, jelly or syrup

Note: This educational information is not intended to substitute for expert health and medical advice or treatment. The information is designed to help you make informed choices about your health. Please consult your medical professional for questions or information that is specific to your medical condition.