

### Checking your Blood Sugar is Important

To prevent the negative consequences of diabetes, blood sugar levels should be kept within the healthy range. Hyper- and hypoglycaemia should be avoided.

Blood sugar monitoring is carried out with a 'blood glucose meter' or 'blood glucose monitor'. You simply take a drop of blood by pricking a finger and the meter tells you how much sugar is in the blood at that time.

**Ask your healthcare professional about your individual blood sugar target range.**

**Monitoring blood sugar levels is the most important way you can check how well you are managing your diabetes!**



For further information and personalized advice about avoiding hyper- and hypoglycaemia, please contact your Healthcare Professional.

Would you like to know more about diabetes?  
Please visit our website:

[www.diabetes.ascensia.co.za](http://www.diabetes.ascensia.co.za)



CUSTOMER SERVICE HELPLINE

**0800 246 243**

**Caution:** This brochure does not replace your Healthcare Professional advice.

Source: [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org), [www.diabetes.ca](http://www.diabetes.ca)



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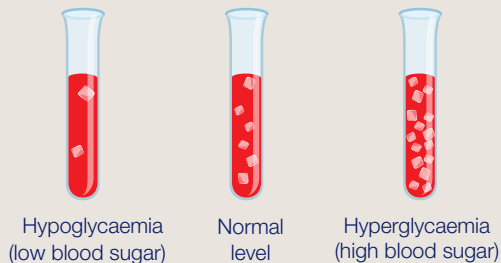


# Avoiding Hyper- and Hypoglycaemia



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## The Glucose Level



## High Blood Sugar Levels – What you Should Know

**HYPERGLYCAEMIA** is the medical name for **high blood sugar levels**. It means that the amount of sugar in your blood is above the normal range.

Blood sugar levels rise too high when your body does not produce enough insulin or when it does not properly respond to insulin.

## Causes of High Blood Sugar Levels

With type 1 and type 2 diabetes, high blood sugar levels can be caused by:

- Forgetting an insulin injection or injecting a dose that is too low;
- Performing a physical activity that is less intensive than usual;
- Having a larger meal than intended;
- Experiencing a stressful event at work or at home.

## How Can you Tell if your Blood Sugar Levels are too HIGH?

There are a number of signs to watch out for:

- You are thirstier than usual;
- You need to urinate more often;
- You have a sweet-smelling urine

## Good Diabetes Management

To prevent the negative consequences of diabetes, blood sugar levels should be kept within the healthy range. Therefore, you need to check your blood sugar levels several times throughout the day. Talk with your healthcare professional about what your individual blood sugar target range should be, and how often you should test your blood sugar levels.

## High Blood Sugar Levels – What you Should Do

One way to lower your blood sugar is to increase your level of physical activity. But if your blood sugar levels are very high, there might be so-called ketones in your urine. In this case, you should not exercise! The reason is that exercising while ketones are present may cause your blood sugar levels to rise even higher. Ask your doctor about testing for ketones and the best way to bring your blood sugar levels back to normal.

The food you eat has a major influence on your blood sugar levels. Review the amount and the types of food you eat, and reduce your sugar intake.

If healthy eating and physical activity do not work well enough, your doctor may readjust the timing or the dosage of your insulin or other diabetes medication (if it has been prescribed by your healthcare professional).

## Low Blood Sugar Levels – What you Should Know

**HYPOGLYCAEMIA** is the medical name for **low blood sugar levels**. It means that the amount of sugar in your blood is below the target range.

**Caution! If your blood sugar level drops too low, you are at risk of severe consequences such as accidents, injuries, coma and death. Low blood sugar levels require immediate action!**

**Ask your healthcare professional about your individual blood sugar target range!**

## Reasons for Low Blood Sugar Levels

The reasons for low blood sugar levels can be:

- The dose of insulin was too high (type 1 diabetes);
- The dose of oral diabetes medication was too high and has to be modified (type 1 diabetes and insulin treated type 2 diabetes);
- Your meals were smaller than planned;
- You did not eat before exercising;
- You were more active than usual;
- You were tensed or stressed - tension or stress may cause your body to react with reduced blood sugar levels.

## How can you Tell if your Blood Sugar Levels are too LOW?

The way you react to low blood sugar levels may not be the same as someone else. Listen to your body and watch out for the following potential signs:

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Feeling       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hungry or nauseated</li><li>• Sweaty, clammy or chilly</li><li>• Shaky, anxious or nervous</li><li>• Lightheaded, sleepy or dizzy</li><li>• Weak or fatigued</li><li>• Uncoordinated, disoriented or in a delirium</li><li>• Easily annoyed or impatient</li><li>• Stubborn, sad or angry</li></ul> |
| and/or having | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A quick or racing pulse/heartbeat</li><li>• A headache</li><li>• Cloudy or impaired vision</li><li>• Bad dreams or calling out while sleeping</li><li>• A convulsion or blackout</li></ul>  |

## Low Blood Sugar Levels – What you Should Do

How to react on low blood sugar situations your healthcare professional will educate you and will provide recommendations. In general the following simple steps are recommended:

1. Eat or drink something containing 15 to 20 grams of sugar;
2. Test your blood sugar levels again after 15 minutes;
3. If your blood sugar level is still too low, repeat these steps;
4. When your blood sugar level is back to normal, and if you are not scheduled to eat within the next couple of hours, have a bite to eat now.

**Severe hypoglycaemia** is when an episode of very low blood sugar occurs and you may not be able to recover without help. As an emergency **treatment for very low hypoglycaemia**, a substance called glucagon can be injected. Glucagon counteracts the effect of insulin by inducing the liver to deliver stored sugar into the bloodstream.

If you have a tendency for severe episodes of low blood sugar levels, talk with your healthcare professional about a prescription for a glucagon kit and how to use it.

If you have severe hypoglycaemia and are unconscious, someone else will need to give you the glucagon injection. Family members, friends and colleagues should therefore learn how to administer glucagon when you need it.