

Low Blood Sugar – Hypoglycemia

What is low blood sugar?

- Low blood sugar means that the amount of sugar in your blood is less than 4.0 mmol/L (or 6.0 mmol/L for children under 6 years of age)
- Each person will have different symptoms of low blood sugar
- Your blood sugar can drop quickly
- If you have just been diagnosed with diabetes, it may be hard to know how low blood sugar feels.
- The feelings you may have with low blood sugar can change over time
- It may become harder to feel low blood sugar if it happens often

What causes a low blood sugar?

- More physical activity than usual
- Not enough food
- Too much insulin (or medication)
- Illness
- Drinking alcohol
- Weight loss

How can you avoid low blood sugar and be prepared?

- Choose **fast sugar first**. Chocolate or other food will take longer to work.
- **Carry 3 treatments for a low blood sugar and snacks with you at all times**, especially in the car and when being active.
- Always test your blood sugar before you drive. Remember “5 to drive.” See the *Driving Safety and Diabetes* handout.
- Exercise after meals.
- Eat extra food when you are more active. For example 1 medium fresh fruit OR 2-3 plain cookies.
- Eat meals and snacks on time. Try to keep within 1 hour of planned meal times.
- Take the right dose of your insulin or pills at the right time every day.
- Test your blood sugar regularly and keep records of the results.
- Take note of how you felt before and during a time of low blood sugar. Think about possible causes. Record this information to help you look for patterns.
- Call your Diabetes Educator or Doctor if:
 - You have more low blood sugars than “usual”
 - You have any severe low blood sugar (where you need help to treat)
- Wear diabetes medical identification (i.e. Medic Alert™ bracelet).



Low blood sugars can make you feel really rotten.
Treat with **fast sugar first**. Stay calm. You will be okay.