



## Causes, Symptoms, Treatment and Prevention of Hypoglycaemia

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### Description

Hypoglycaemia, often referred to as low blood sugar, is a medical condition characterized by abnormally low levels of glucose (sugar) in the bloodstream. It can affect individuals with diabetes and those without, and if left untreated, it can lead to serious complications. This article discusses about the causes, symptoms, and treatment options for hypoglycaemia.

### Causes of hypoglycaemia

**Diabetes medications:** Hypoglycaemia is a common side effect of diabetes medications, particularly insulin and certain oral medications. These drugs help lower blood sugar levels, but an excessive dose or an imbalance between medication, diet, and physical activity can lead to dangerously low levels of glucose.

**Skipping meals:** Not eating on time or skipping meals can cause a drop in blood sugar levels.

**Excessive alcohol consumption:** Alcohol can interfere with the liver's ability to release glucose into the bloodstream, which can result in hypoglycaemia, particularly if consumed without food or in excess.

**Medical conditions:** Some medical conditions, such as certain liver disorders, adrenal gland problems, and kidney diseases, can impair the body's ability to regulate blood sugar levels, potentially leading to hypoglycaemia.

**Over exercise:** Strenuous physical activity, especially when not balanced with adequate food intake, can deplete glucose reserves and cause low blood sugar.

### Symptoms of hypoglycaemia

Recognizing the signs and symptoms of hypoglycaemia is crucial for prompt intervention. Symptoms include shakiness or tremors, sweating, rapid heartbeat, irritability or mood changes, dizziness or light-headedness, hunger, confusion or difficulty concentrating, blurred vision, headache, weakness or fatigue, nausea, seizures (in severe cases). If left untreated, severe hypoglycaemia can lead to unconsciousness and, in extreme cases, coma or death.

### Treatment of hypoglycaemia

Managing hypoglycaemia involves raising blood sugar levels to a safe range as quickly as possible. Here are some effective strategies:

**Consume sugar:** Eating or drinking something with high sugar content is the quickest way to alleviate hypoglycaemia. Examples include fruit juice, regular soda, honey, or glucose tablets. These rapidly increase blood sugar levels.

**Follow up with complex carbohydrates:** Once corrected the immediate issue with sugar, follow up with a balanced snack or meal containing complex carbohydrates, such as whole grains, to help stabilize your blood sugar levels.

**Glucagon injection:** In severe cases where the person with hypoglycaemia is unconscious or unable to swallow, a glucagon injection can be administered. This hormone prompts the liver to release stored glucose into the bloodstream.

**Adjust medications:** If someone has diabetes and experience frequent hypoglycaemia, consult the healthcare provider. They may need to adjust the medication regimen to reduce the risk of low blood

sugar.

### **Preventing hypoglycaemia**

Preventing hypoglycaemia is key to maintaining your health and well-being, especially while having diabetes. Here are some strategies to consider:

**Regular meal schedule:** Eat meals and snacks at consistent times each day to help regulate blood sugar levels.

**Balanced diet:** Focus on a balanced diet that includes carbohydrates, protein, and healthy fats. Avoid excessive sugar and refined carbohydrates.

**Monitor blood sugar:** If having diabetes, monitor the blood sugar levels regularly as recommended by the healthcare provider. This will help to detect and manage fluctuations.

**Medication management:** Taking diabetes medications as prescribed and communicate with the healthcare team if experience recurring hypoglycaemia.

**Limit alcohol:** Consume alcohol in moderation, and always eat when drinking to prevent alcohol-induced hypoglycaemia.

**Exercise safely:** Exercise regularly, talk to the healthcare provider about creating a safe exercise plan that aligns with the medication and dietary needs.

Hypoglycaemia is a condition that affects millions of people, both with and without diabetes. Recognizing the causes, symptoms, and appropriate treatments for low blood sugar is essential for maintaining good health and avoiding potentially life-threatening complications. By adopting preventative measures and managing the condition effectively, individuals can lead healthy and active lives while keeping hypoglycaemia under control. Always consult with a healthcare professional for personalized guidance on managing and preventing hypoglycaemia.