



diabetes today

HEALTH NEWS AND INFORMATION

What to do if you're low and don't know

For some people, a drop in blood glucose comes with few symptoms.

If you have a problem recognizing low blood glucose:

- Check your blood glucose often.
- Treat low or dropping sugar levels even if you feel fine.
- Let your health care team know if your blood glucose drops below 50 milligrams per deciliter without any symptoms.
- Alert friends and family to watch for symptoms of hypoglycemia.

Source: American Diabetes Association

THE low side OF BLOOD SUGAR

Sugar, quick

The quickest way to recover from a drop in blood glucose is to eat or drink some form of sugar, such as glucose tablets, hard candy, fruit juice or a regular soft drink. Repeat the treatment if your blood glucose is still too low after 15 minutes.

If your condition worsens, you will need an injection of glucagon. You can do it yourself.

If you pass out, someone should give you glucagon and call 911. Under these circumstances, no one should inject insulin or put anything in your mouth.

Source: American Diabetes Association



PEOPLE WITH DIABETES USUALLY worry that their blood glucose is too high. But occasionally blood glucose can be too low. This potentially dangerous condition is known as hypoglycemia.

Blood glucose can drop for a number of reasons, including as a reaction to some medicines used to treat diabetes. It could plunge due to skipping or delaying a meal, drinking alcohol or increasing your activity level.

You may be hypoglycemic if you:

- Feel shaky, dizzy or sweaty.
- Feel hungry.
- Have a headache.
- Have pale skin.
- Have difficulty speaking or paying attention.

- Have sudden moodiness or behavior changes, such as crying for no apparent reason.
- Feel anxious or confused.
- Feel tingling around your mouth.

Hypoglycemia while you are sleeping could cause you to:

- Cry out or have nightmares.
- Perspire enough to dampen your bed clothing.
- Feel tired, irritable or confused when you wake up.

Check your blood glucose right away if you have symptoms.

Find health improvement information online at www.mychp.com.

HEALTHY facts

NEW INSULIN DELIVERY OPTION

Until recently, insulin injections were the only option for the more than 5 million people in the United States who need to take insulin. Now, however, there's an alternative: Exubera, a powdered form of insulin that can be inhaled. This is the first new way to take insulin since the discovery of the hormone in the 1920s. Exubera is not recommended if you smoke or have asthma, bronchitis or emphysema.

—U.S. Food and Drug Administration



SMOKERS MORE LIKELY TO DEVELOP DIABETES

Researchers have now found that smokers are nearly three times more likely to develop diabetes than people who have never smoked. And

the risk may be even higher for people who smoke a lot. The good news is that smokers who quit can lower their risk for diabetes.

—American Diabetes Association

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slow or fast?



GLYCEMIC INDEX SHOWS HOW FAST VARIOUS FOODS RAISE BLOOD SUGAR

LOW OR HIGH, GOOD OR BAD, simple or complex—carbohydrates have been analyzed and measured by diet gurus and scientists alike. To add to the confusion, there's also a scale for carbs—the glycemic index.

What is it? The glycemic index ranks carbohydrates by how rapidly they raise blood sugar levels. Pure glucose is the standard and is ranked 100. Foods such as beans, yogurt and many fruits raise blood sugar more slowly than pure glucose, so they have low glycemic values. White bread and instant potatoes cause rapid spikes in blood sugar, so they have high values.

What are its uses? Eating foods with low glycemic values can help people with diabetes control glucose in their blood, the journal *Diabetes Care* reports. Low-glycemic-index foods can also help control weight because they can make people feel full longer after a meal.

What are the drawbacks? The glycemic index of a food can vary depending on how the food is stored, cooked and combined with other foods in a meal. It can even vary from person to person for the same food. And since the glycemic index isn't based on portion size, it can be hard to apply to your diet.

Can it work for you? Some studies show that the glycemic index can be helpful, but experts disagree on its benefits. If you have questions, talk to your doctor. The best carb strategy may be to stay active and eat a variety of whole grains, fruits and vegetables.

Source: American Diabetes Association

24-hour nurse line:
(816) 271-4000
1-800-455-2476

3 keys TO GOOD ONLINE INFORMATION

INFORMATION IS NEVER MORE than a few keystrokes away on the Internet. Unfortunately, the information isn't always good.

To make sure you get reliable health information online, you have to be careful.

1. Know your source. Take note of a Web site's source, and be very suspicious if someone is trying to sell you something or is simply sharing his or her own story or opinions. That information may not be as thorough and accurate as information from a government agency or an organization, such as the American Diabetes Association. If you can't identify a source or if you don't find contact information, be especially cautious.

2. Look for signs of quality. For example, is there a date on the information? That's not crucial if you're looking for a basic explanation of diabetes, but it is if you're seeking current treatment guidelines.

Other things that may offer clues about quality include:

- Content approved by an editorial board made up of diabetes experts.
- Statistics or statements supported with footnotes referring to other real, reliable sources.

3. Be judgmental. If something seems sensational or too good to be true, it very well might be. Be skeptical. Verify information with more than one source.

If you have questions, talk to your doctor. And remember: Nothing should take the place of your doctor's advice.

Sources: National Institutes of Health; University of California



Be skeptical. Verify information with more than one source.

Good places to start your online search

If you're looking for online information about diabetes, try starting your search at one of the following Internet sites. Each offers extensive and reliable information.



American Diabetes Association
(www.diabetes.org).

This site can help educate you about virtually all aspects of diabetes, including risk factors, prevention and treatment. You'll also find valuable information on diabetes research and topics such as nutrition in addition to recipes and diabetes books.



National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases
(www.niddk.nih.gov).

This site is part of the National Institutes of Health and contains a wealth of information about diabetes.



Healthfinder
(www.healthfinder.gov).

This is a federal site developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and other government agencies. It provides links to carefully evaluated information and the Web sites of more than 1,500 organizations.

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HEALTHY. recipe

Veggie-herb soup

Ingredients

- 2½ cups vegetable broth
- 2½ cups water
- 1 cup low-sodium tomato or vegetable juice
- 1 cup peeled tomatoes, chopped
- 1 cup carrots, chopped
- 1 cup green beans or yellow wax beans
- 1 cup onions, finely chopped
- 1 cup zucchini or yellow squash, thinly sliced
- 1 cup leeks, chopped
- 2 cups unpeeled red potatoes, diced
- 1 cheesecloth bag of fresh herbs (parsley, basil, etc.)

Instructions

1. Bring liquid ingredients to a boil in a deep soup kettle.
2. Add everything else.
3. Turn heat down and simmer until vegetables are tender, partially covering the pot with a lid.
4. Add salt to taste.

Makes eight 1-cup servings.

Nutrition facts (per serving)

Calories 97	Calories from fat 9
Percent Daily Value*	
Total fat 1g	2%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 89mg	4%
Carbohydrate 22g	7%
Protein 3g	
Percent of calories from fat 9	

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000-calorie diet.
Reprinted with permission from *Vegan Handbook* (The Vegetarian Resource Group, 1996)

SMALL STEPS, big rewards

YOU DON'T HAVE TO OVERHAUL your entire life to reduce your risk of diabetes. A few simple steps can make a significant difference.

In fact, experts at the National Institutes of Health say you can prevent diabetes or delay its onset by doing just two things: getting active and losing weight. These steps can also help you control the disease if you have it.

You don't have to run a marathon or go on a super-restricted diet. Instead, focus on doing at least 30 minutes of physical activity five days a week and on losing at least 5 to 7 percent of your body weight.

A good way to start is to walk. Don't try to do too much too soon. Aim to walk a little farther and a little longer over several weeks.

You can help prevent or control diabetes with activity and weight loss.

Also, think of ways to work walking into your daily routine. Hop off the bus a stop early and walk home. Take the stairs. Hand-deliver office messages instead of e-mailing them. You get the idea.

At the same time, reduce your food intake. For example:

- Drink a glass of water just before mealtimes to curb your appetite.
- At restaurants, split an entrée or take half to go.
- Eat slowly. Try to be the last one to finish your meal.