



# *Low Blood Glucose*

## **What is low blood glucose?**

Low blood glucose (hypoglycemia) is defined as a blood glucose below 70 mg/dL. Signs and symptoms of lows can occur when your blood glucose falls below 70 mg/dL or when your blood glucose drops quickly even though your blood glucose levels are in the normal range.

### **Causes of low blood glucose may include:**

- Too much insulin
- Too much diabetes medication
- Too much physical activity
- Not enough food intake or missed meals

### **Signs of low blood glucose can include:**

- Increased hunger
- Sweatiness
- Shakiness
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Being irritable
- Acting differently
- Difficulty concentrating
- Blurred vision

## **Important Reminders**

1. Always carry food for treating low blood glucose with you.
2. Wear identification stating that you have diabetes.
3. Teach family, friends and coworkers to recognize the signs and symptoms, and be familiar with the treatments of low blood glucose, including the use of glucagon. Be sure that the glucagon kit has not expired.
4. Check your blood glucose before and after physical activity. If low blood glucose levels are a problem, ask your healthcare provider how to balance your diabetes plan with your fitness program.
5. Check your blood glucose before you drive or use heavy machinery, and every 60 to 90 minutes thereafter.

## *Low Blood Glucose - continued*

### **Steps for treating a low blood glucose**

It is important for you to know how to recognize and treat low blood glucose. Be sure to let your healthcare provider know if you continue to have low blood glucose.

1. Stop activity and sit down.
2. Check your blood glucose to confirm that you are low. If your blood glucose falls below 70 mg/dL, treat it right away. If you are unable to check your blood glucose but think that you are low, treat it anyway.
3. Treat your low blood glucose by taking 15 g of fast-acting carbohydrate (carb) in the form of one of the following. Do NOT treat hypoglycemia with chocolate, peanut butter or other high fat foods, because these types of food do not raise blood glucose fast enough.

15 g of fast-acting carbohydrates are...

- 4 oz fruit juice
- 6 oz regular soda
- 3-4 glucose tablets
- 1 small box of raisins (2 Tbsp)
- 1 Tbsp honey or syrup
- 7-8 gummy bears

4. Recheck blood glucose after 10-15 minutes. If blood glucose is less than 80 mg/dL, repeat the treatment (step 3).
5. Follow with a meal or snack. This snack should contain 15 g of carbohydrates, such as ½ sandwich, 1-2 cookies or 8 oz milk. If your meal is more than an hour away, eat 30 g of carbohydrates.

