

HYPERGLYCEMIA AND HYPOGLYCEMIA

What is hyperglycemia?

Hyperglycemia (hi"per-gli-SE'me-ah) is an increase in plasma glucose (blood sugar). It can turn into a complex medical condition -- diabetic ketoacidosis (ke"to-as"i'd-O'sis) and coma -- if it's not treated on time and adequately. Hyperglycemia is usually the first sign of diabetes mellitus (di"ah-BE'teez or di"ah-BE'tis meh-LI'tis). Symptoms of hyperglycemia are

- Polyuria (pol"e-YUR'e-ah) (excess urine)
- Polydipsia (pol"e-DIP'se-ah) (thirst)
- Polyphagia (pol"e-FA'je-ah) (excessive hunger)

What is hypoglycemia?

Hypoglycemia (hi"po-gli-SE'me-ah) is a low level of plasma glucose (blood sugar). It's a dangerous condition because glucose is the major source of energy for the brain. Lack of glucose, like lack of oxygen, produces brain damage or even death if the deficit is prolonged. Hypoglycemia can occur after insulin excess and/or inadequate glucose intake, among other causes. These situations are commonly seen in people with diabetes who receive too much insulin or who don't eat enough.

Hypoglycemia starts to cause the symptoms below when glucose levels fall below 50 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL):

- Sweating
- Tremors
- Anxiety
- Hunger
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Cloudy vision
- Confusion
- Abnormal Behavior
- Convulsions
- Loss of consciousness

What should you do if hypoglycemia occurs?

A person suspected of hypoglycemia must eat carbohydrates (starches or sugars) immediately.