

What to do About Low Blood Sugar Levels



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A blood glucose meter reading below the target range specified by the physician indicates low blood sugar. The following are *general* treatments for low blood sugar. The physician and parents (for a child) should determine what course to follow. Please note that people with type 1 diabetes have symptoms of low blood sugar at various readings. Some people with type 1 diabetes feel perfectly fine at readings below 70. Others begin to show low blood sugar symptoms at readings somewhat above 70.

1. If blood sugar levels are slightly low and the person is alert and lucid, he or she should:
 - Not exercise.
 - Eat. After eating, check blood sugar level again to make sure it is within the target range. The person may require another snack later in the day.
 - Continue to check blood sugar levels regularly.
2. If blood sugar levels are low and individual is showing signs of low blood sugar but is still able to eat,
 - He or she should immediately eat or drink a fast-acting source of glucose (i.e., juice, glucose gel, or tablets). He or she may need to eat more food after that (i.e., crackers or other complex carbohydrate).
 - Continue to check blood sugar levels regularly.
3. If blood sugar levels are low and individual is showing signs of low blood sugar and is unconscious, convulsing, and/or an unable to swallow:
 - Remain calm.
 - DO NOT administer food or drink to an unconscious person, as it may obstruct the airway.
 - Position the individual on the floor on his/her side to prevent falling, injury, or choking.
 - Call 911.
 - Administer emergency glucagon shot (unconsciousness may last up to ten minutes post-glucagon; be prepared for vomiting as the individual comes out of becomes conscious).
 - Continue to check blood sugar levels regularly.
 - Give additional food (i.e., crackers or other complex carbohydrate) when able to eat, if needed, in order to keep blood sugar levels in target range.