

What is Hypoglycaemia (Low Blood Glucose)?

Among those with Diabetes a condition called – Hypoglycaemia or **low** blood sugar levels can occur. Hypoglycaemia occurs when blood sugar (glucose) level falls below a level of 70 milligrams per decilitre (mg/dl) or less.

Symptoms are tremors, nervousness or anxiety, sweating, irritability, confusion, rapid/fast heartbeat, dizziness, hunger, nausea, blurred/impaired vision, headaches, weakness or fatigue, lack of coordination, seizures, unconsciousness, etc.

There are several reasons why this may happen. One cause can be a long gap between two meals. The other common reason is side effects of some anti-diabetic drugs.

Hypoglycaemia can be treated by consuming a small amount of sugar-rich foods as soon as symptoms appear. For such an emergency, diabetic patients should be advised to always carry something to eat such as loose sugar, rock candy (*misri*) or toffee etc.

Motivating diabetics to regularly monitor blood glucose levels, eat regular meals, creating awareness on hypoglycaemia and providing a tailor-made treatment plan with drugs, etc. are some of the ways to prevent Hypoglycaemia amongst diabetic patients.

Management and Control of Diabetes

Change in lifestyle behaviours is effective in preventing or delaying the occurrence of Type 2 diabetes or the onset of complications. They include

- Maintaining a healthy body weight - avoid excess weight gain.
- Regular physical activity of at least 30 minutes of regular activity for at least 5 days a week. Higher levels of activity are required for weight control.
- Take regular small frequent meals. Skipping a meal can lead to low blood sugar level. Eat a balanced and healthy diet-avoiding sugar, salt and fats in the diet.
- Eat foods that are high in fibre like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, cereals, whole pulses with chilka (skin) and their products.
- Avoid tobacco in any form.
- Avoid drinking alcohol.
- Regularly check the blood sugar levels.
- Follow medical advice of the doctor.

