

TYPE 1 DIABETES FIRST AID

When someone living with type 1 diabetes (T1D) experiences a **high or low blood glucose event**, it can be scary for everyone. **Educating yourself** on how to recognize high and low blood glucose episodes and **knowing what to do** in an emergency will help.

Before administering first aid, remember:

- Always **ask for consent** before offering care, and encourage them to **check their blood glucose if able**.
- **NEVER administer insulin** yourself. Only a medical professional can be certain that insulin is the correct treatment.
- Providing sugar is considered the safest form of diabetic first aid. Even if their blood glucose is high, giving them **15 to 20 grams of sugar** will not cause additional harm, and it could be live saving in the event of low blood glucose.

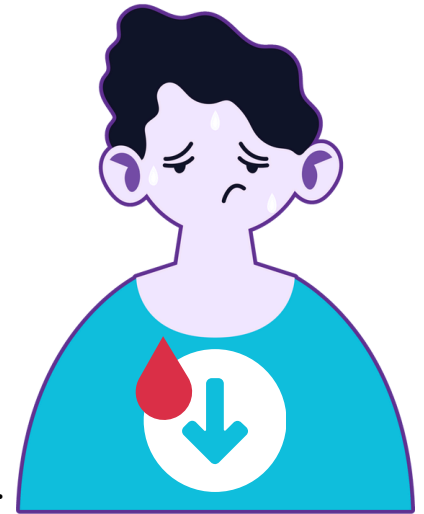
Hypoglycemia - LOW Blood Glucose

Symptoms

- Weakness, faintness or hunger
- Confusion and irrational behaviour
- Sweating with cold, clammy skin
- Deteriorating level of response
- Rapid pulse
- Palpitations
- Trembling or shaking

How to help:

- 1 Offer them a sugary drink (e.g. juice or a sports drink).
- 2 Monitor their condition for 10-15 minutes.
- 3 If their condition does not improve, offer additional sugar, ask them about administering glucagon and call 911 if they are unresponsive.



Hyperglycemia - HIGH Blood Glucose

Symptoms

- Excessive thirst & urination
- Tiredness
- Blurred vision
- Hot, dry skin
- 'Sweet' smelling breath

How to help:

- 1 If they have insulin, ask if they need to administer it.
- 2 Encourage them to drink water.
- 3 Seek medical aid if symptoms worsen.



IMPORTANT!

If someone with T1D begins to **vomit**, experiences **abdominal pain**, develops **rapid breathing**, or **loses consciousness**, call **911** immediately.

Customizable Blood Sugar Chart

Managing T1D takes a lot of work, and it is important to remember **asking others for help, especially in emergency situations**, can go a long way in reducing the weight of it. Download and complete the Customizable Blood Sugar chart to share with friends, roommates residence staff and other supporters so they know how to help in an emergency. **Remember you are not asking them to take on managing your T1D, but that you may need them in emergency situations.**

How to Use the Chart:

- Fill in your personal levels for each blood sugar range based on your T1D management, consulting with your health care team for accuracy.
- Share with your contacts and walk them through emergency protocols.
- We recommend filling out the form before printing to ensure it is legible during emergency situations. instructions and fillable chart available to download at: www.diabeteshopefoundation.com).

DANGEROUS HIGH _____ mmol/L OR HIGHER	Symptoms	Action Plan
VERY HIGH _____ mmol/L to _____ mmol/L	Symptoms	Action Plan
HIGH _____ mmol/L to _____ mmol/L	Symptoms	Action Plan
COMFORTABLE _____ mmol/L to _____ mmol/L	<i>i</i> I have type 1 diabetes. This chart contains important information about my diabetes management. In case I am unresponsive or confused, follow the action plans. If I am unconscious, call 911. Emergency Contact 1: _____ Emergency Contact 2: _____	
LOW _____ mmol/L to _____ mmol/L	Symptoms	Action Plan
VERY LOW _____ mmol/L to _____ mmol/L	Symptoms	Action Plan
DANGEROUS LOW _____ mmol/L OR LOWER **If I am unconscious, call 911.**	Symptoms	Action Plan

Additional Resources:

[Diabetes Emergency Fact Sheet - St. John's Australia](#)
[Diabetes-Related Ketoacidosis \(DKA\) - Cleveland Clinic](#)
[Comprehensive Guide for First Aid & CPR](#)
[St. John's Ambulance - Diabetic Emergencies](#)
[Diabetes Canada Resources](#)

