

# Things Everyone with Diabetes Should Know

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## 1. What should I do with my blood sugar readings?

- Write down all of your blood sugar readings on your blood sugar record sheet. This will help you track your blood sugar levels.
- Bring the record sheet with you to every clinic visit and show it to your doctor. If your blood sugars are often high or low, the amount of insulin or medicine you take may need to be changed.

**Call your doctor if your blood sugar is less than 70 mg/dL or over 200 mg/dL several times in a week.**

## 2. What should I do if my blood sugar is low?

- Symptoms of low blood sugar can vary. It is important to learn how you feel when your blood sugar is too low. Common symptoms of low blood sugar include:
  - ▶ Feeling shaky, dizzy or light-headed
  - ▶ Feeling weak or tired
  - ▶ A fast heart beat
  - ▶ A headache
  - ▶ Blurred vision
  - ▶ Sweating
  - ▶ Not being able to think clearly
- If you have symptoms of a low blood sugar, check your blood sugar level right away. **If your blood sugar is less than 70 mg/dL act quickly and follow the "Rule of 15".**
- If you have symptoms of a low blood sugar and you are not able to check your blood sugar, **follow the "Rule of 15".**

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**This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.**

## The "Rule of 15" includes the following:

**Eat or drink 15 grams of a fast acting sugar.** Each of the following items provides 15 grams of a fast acting sugar.

- 1/2 cup (4 ounces) of fruit juice or regular soda (not diet)
- 1 cup (8 ounces) of skim or fat free milk
- Glucose tablets (follow the directions on the package)
- 1 tablespoon sugar, honey or corn syrup

## **Wait 15 minutes and check your blood sugar again.**

- If your blood sugar is still less than 70 mg/dL, or if you do not feel better, **eat or drink another 15 grams of fast acting sugar.**

## **Wait another 15 minutes and check your blood sugar again.**

- **If your blood sugar is less than 70 mg/dL, call your doctor.**
- If your blood sugar is 100 mg/dL or more, you should be okay. You may feel tired for a short period of time. If it is close to mealtime, you can eat. If your next mealtime is more than 1 hour away, eat a snack of 30 grams of carbohydrate with a protein source (for example 1/2 sandwich and 1 cup of milk).

## 3. What should I do if I do not have my blood glucose meter and I think my blood sugar is low?

- **It is important to always have a meter with you to check your blood sugar.** If you do not have your meter and you think your blood sugar is low, follow the "Rule of 15." Check your blood sugar as soon as you can get to your meter.

## 4. Can I reuse my lancets or insulin pen needles?

- **No, do not reuse your lancets or insulin pen needles.** Reusing lancets and pen needles can increase your risk of infection. It is important to use a new needle and lancet each time you check your blood sugar.