



Health Services

University of Oklahoma Student Affairs

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Alcoholic Beverages Alcohol may interfere with certain medical conditions and/or medications. Therefore, one should consult his/her health care provider prior to consuming alcoholic beverages. In addition, one should meet with a dietitian to find out how to fit alcoholic beverages into a meal plan. A few drinking guidelines include:

- Recognize that some wine coolers and mixed drinks contain sugar and should be counted as part of one's meal plan
- A serving of alcohol is 5 ounces of wine, 12 ounces of beer, or 1.5 ounces of distilled spirits
- Choose "light" beer and dry wine, which tend to contain less sugar
- Low blood sugar can be easily confused with intoxication (if one experiences low blood sugar while drinking, he/she may not realize the urgent need for medical attention and the serious problems that may arise)

Exercise Before one starts a physical activity program, he/she should consult with his/her health care provider and a registered dietitian. Regular exercise, in conjunction with a healthy eating plan, is important in managing diabetes. Some benefits of exercise include:

- Lowering blood sugar levels
- Affecting the rate of insulin absorption
- Lowering the risk of heart disease
- Increasing the use of glucose by muscles

Tips for exercising:

- Eat a high-carbohydrate snack before mild to moderate exercise
- Always bring some form of sugar to each exercise session
- Stop exercising when symptoms of low blood sugar (dizziness, shakiness) are experienced and take some form of sugar immediately
- Make exercise a regular part of daily lifestyle

Hyperglycemia

Hyperglycemia, or high blood sugar, can occur when the body has too little insulin or when the body cannot use insulin properly.

Symptoms

- Increased thirst or very dry mouth
- Increased appetite
- Frequent urination
- Fatigue/drowsiness

As the condition worsens, the following symptoms may occur: dry or flushed skin, abdominal pain, nausea or vomiting. The best way to treat hyperglycemia is to follow a daily routine (i.e., follow a meal plan, participate in physical activity, and follow a medication routine).

Complications of Untreated Hyperglycemia

Ketoacidosis, or diabetic coma, can develop when hyperglycemia is left untreated. Ketoacidosis occurs when the body doesn't have enough insulin and can't use glucose for energy. Instead the body breaks down fats for energy and produces waste products (ketones), which can poison the body, possibly leading to coma or death.

Hypoglycemia

Hypoglycemia is also known as low blood sugar*. It occurs as a result of too much insulin, too little food, not eating on time, or too much exercise.

Symptoms

- Shakiness
- Dizziness
- Hunger
- Sweating
- Pale skin
- Confusion
- Headache
- Jerky movements
- Rapid heart beat
- Sudden changes in behavior
- Tingling sensation around the mouth

***Important! Treat this quickly!** Test blood glucose immediately and consume some form of sugar (glucose tablets, juice, or hard candy) if blood glucose levels are confirmed low. Fifteen to twenty minutes later, re-test blood glucose levels. Treat and re-test until the blood glucose levels are within normal range.

Like ketoacidosis, hypoglycemia can lead to coma and death if left untreated.

References

www.eatright.org [American Dietetic Association (ADA)]
www.cdc.gov (Centers for Disease Control)

Diabetes

Meeting the health needs of OU students, faculty, staff, and dependents

1 | Diabetes

What is Diabetes?

Most of the food that a person eats is converted into glucose, or blood sugar, which the body uses for energy. The pancreas, an organ located near the stomach, produces a hormone called insulin to help glucose get into the cells of the body. Diabetes is a condition in which the body either doesn't make enough insulin or can't use its own insulin efficiently. This causes sugar to build up in the blood.

**There are approximately 16 million people with diabetes in the United States. Unfortunately, 5 million of the 16 million people don't know they have diabetes.*

Types of Diabetes

- 1 Type I (Insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus)** Type I diabetes occurs when the pancreas either stops making insulin or doesn't make enough insulin. People of any age can get Type I diabetes, but it most commonly occurs suddenly in children or young adults. Type I diabetes is controlled with daily insulin shots as well as a balanced diet and exercise. Type I accounts for 5-10% of all diabetes cases.
- 2 Type II (Non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus)** Type II diabetes occurs when the pancreas doesn't make enough insulin or the body's cells become less receptive to insulin. It develops slowly and usually appears after the age of 40. Type II diabetes is hereditary and is more prevalent in African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans. Obesity is also a risk factor. This type of diabetes can be controlled through a balanced diet, regular exercise, and weight control. Type II accounts for 90-95% of all diabetes cases.
- 3 Gestational Diabetes** Gestational diabetes may occur during pregnancy, as a result of changes in hormone levels. Even though gestational diabetes usually disappears after a woman gives birth, she is still at risk for developing diabetes later in life. This type of diabetes occurs in 2-5% of all pregnancies.

Signs and Symptoms

Type I

- Constant hunger
- Fatigue
- Sudden weight loss

2 | Diabetes

- Frequent urination and extreme thirst
- High level of glucose in the blood and/or urine

Type II

- Blurred vision
- Slow healing skin infections or itchy, dry skin
- Increased thirst and urination
- Weight gain
- Tingling or numbness in fingers and/or toes
- Extreme fatigue/drowsiness

Diabetes Detection

- Blood tests are used to measure blood sugar levels (an 8-hour fast should be observed prior to testing)
- Oral glucose tolerance tests are used to measure sugar levels before and after consumption of a heavy syrup containing specific amounts of glucose

Long-Term Diabetes Complications

Retinopathy Diabetes is the most frequent cause of blindness in adults ages 20-74

Cardiovascular disease Hypertension (high blood pressure) is 2-3 times more common in people with diabetes

Nephropathy Diabetes is the most common cause of End Stage Renal Disease (kidney failure)

Neuropathy Chronic high blood glucose levels are associated with nerve damage

Skin Often dry, prone to lesions and ulcers

Feet Lower extremity amputations from diabetes are greater than 50,000/year due to the loss of sensation, dry skin, foot deformities, and infection

Treatment Plan with Diet

Diet is important! Food raises the blood glucose level. A health care provider and registered dietitian can develop a meal plan that is right for someone with diabetes. A well-balanced meal plan includes reasonable portion sizes, a variety of foods, and proper timing of meals.

Mealtime Following a regular meal schedule and consuming small meals/snacks every 3-4 hours is important in managing diabetes. Skipping meals or eating at different times each day can make it difficult to keep blood sugar levels under control. A registered dietitian can help one select foods and snacks that will help manage diabetes.