



# Treating High Blood Sugar

After you eat food that contains carbohydrates, your body breaks it down into a sugar called **glucose**. A hormone called **insulin** helps you either use or store blood sugar. When you have diabetes, your body doesn't make enough insulin or it cannot use the insulin it makes properly. This can cause you to have too much sugar in your blood, which is a condition called **hyperglycemia**.

## How Does Hyperglycemia Happen?

High blood sugar (hyperglycemia) can happen if you:

- Do not take enough insulin or diabetes medicine
- Take other medicines that increase blood sugar
- Eat more food or carbohydrates than you usually do
- Do not get enough exercise or physical activity
- Get sick, injured, or have surgery
- Have emotional stress, such as family or work problems
- Have changes to hormone levels, such as during menstrual periods



**Glucose** comes from digested food.



**Insulin** is made by the body.

## Hyperglycemia Symptoms:

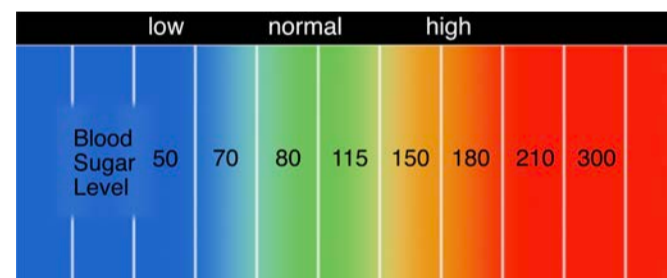
- **Feeling very thirsty**
- **Having to urinate a lot**
- **Feeling tired**
- **Blurry vision**



**Untreated hyperglycemia may result in a dangerously high level of blood sugar, requiring immediate emergency care.**

## Know Your Blood Sugar Target Range

The first step to understanding how to treat hyperglycemia is knowing your normal blood sugar target range.



If you feel or notice symptoms of hyperglycemia, be sure to check your blood sugar level right away.



## If Your Blood Sugar is Above Your Target Range, Make Sure You:



**A.** Drink plenty of water or other sugar-free liquids to stay hydrated.



**B.** Take your insulin or diabetes medication the way your healthcare practitioner says you should.



**Do not take extra medication without first checking with your healthcare practitioner.**



**C.** Check your blood sugar every 4 hours.



**D.** Follow your normal meal plan.



**E.** Increase your physical activity or exercise if you can.



**Do not exercise if your blood sugar is 270 or higher. Exercise may make your blood sugar level go even higher.**



**Contact your healthcare practitioner if your blood sugar stays above your target range or you notice the following symptoms that may need immediate treatment:**

- **Shortness of breath**
- **Breath that smells fruity**
- **Your mouth feels very dry**
- **Confusion**

## Preventing Hyperglycemia

You can help prevent hyperglycemia by:

- Regularly checking your blood sugar
- Following your normal meal plan
- Taking your diabetes medication as prescribed by your healthcare practitioner
- Controlling stress
- Exercising regularly



**To find out more about treating high blood sugar, talk to your healthcare practitioner.**

The information in this handout is intended to supplement the information you receive from your healthcare practitioner and should never be considered personal medical advice. Always contact your healthcare practitioner with health questions and concerns.