

# Diabetes in School

Healthy Schools

June 2023

# Learning Objectives

- Discuss the basics of type I diabetes (T1D).
- Recognize the signs and symptoms of low blood sugar (hypoglycemia) and high blood sugar (hyperglycemia) and how to respond to this.
- Know who to contact immediately in case of an emergency.
- Know where to find more information.
- Know how to support students with T1D.

# What is Diabetes?

Diabetes is a chronic health condition in which the body cannot use the glucose (sugar) found in food.

## Type I (T1D):

The pancreas does NOT produce insulin.

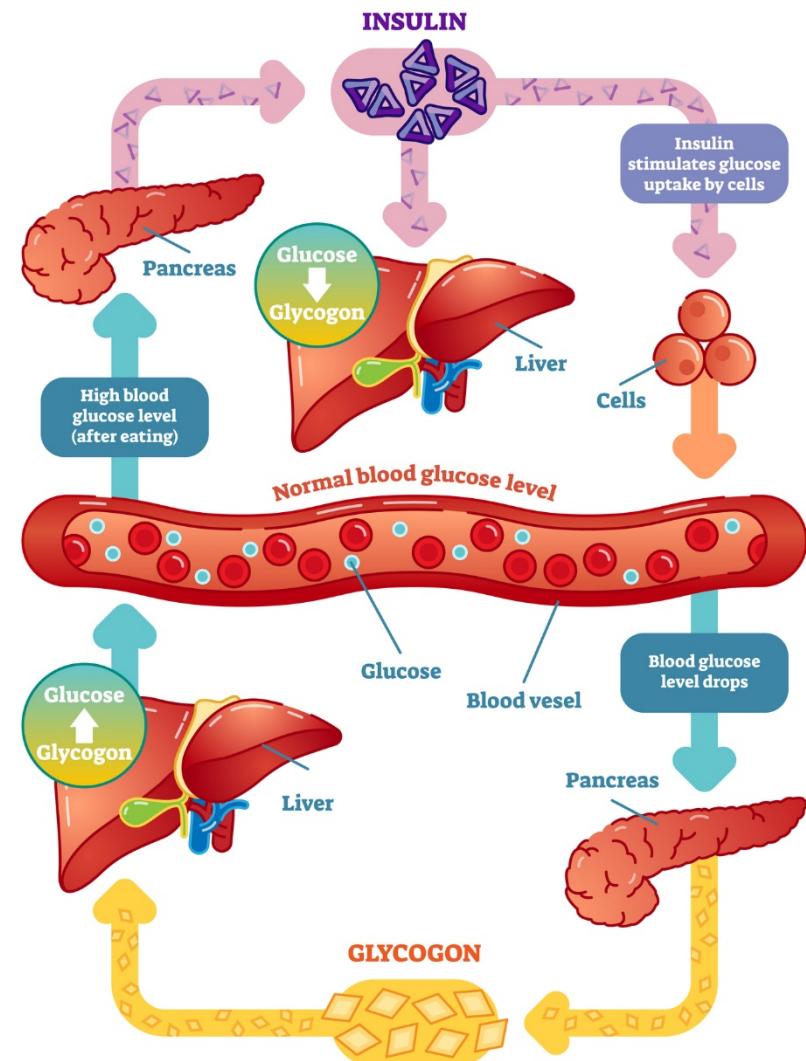
## Type 2:

The pancreas does not produce ENOUGH insulin and/or the body RESISTS the action of insulin.

# What is Insulin?

- Hormone produced in the pancreas.
- Allows our cells to use glucose (sugar).
- Without it, our body can't create energy.

## Insulin and Glucagon



# How is insulin given at school?

Student, parent or trained staff administers the insulin with an insulin pen, insulin pump or via a pre-filled pod system.



Pod photo credit to  
<https://www.omnipod.com/en-ca/what-is-omnipod/omnipod-dash>

# Hypoglycemia: low blood glucose

## SYMPTOMS



SHAKING



SWEATING



ANXIOUS



DIZZINESS



HUNGER



FAST HEARTBEAT



IMPAIRED VISION



WEAKNESS  
FATIGUE



HEADACHE



IRRITABLE

# Emergency Treatment of Hypoglycemia

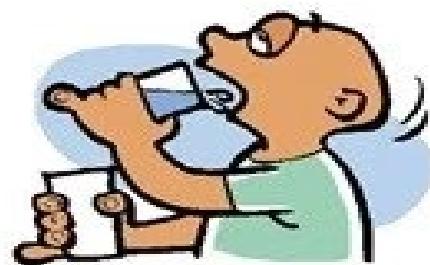
If a student has symptoms of low blood glucose, ALWAYS give a fast acting carbohydrate:

- 175 ml (3/4 c) juice (juice box) or regular pop,  
**or**
- 15 skittles **or**
- 2 packages of rockets candy

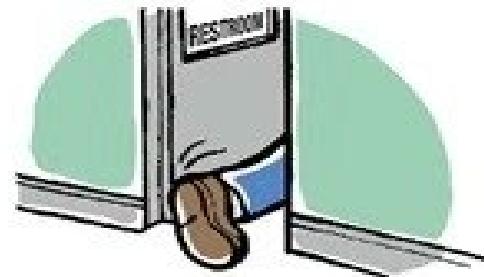
DO NOT give food or drink if the student is unconscious, having a seizure or is unable to swallow. Call 911 and give glucagon if delegated.

**HYPOGLYCEMIA IS LIFE THREATENING IF LEFT UNTREATED**

# Hyperglycemia: high blood glucose



Very thirsty



Needing to pass urine  
more often than usual



Dry skin



Very hungry



Sleepy



Blurry vision



Infections or injuries  
heal more slowly  
than usual

# Role of School Staff

[10 things school staff should know about T1D](#)

- Be familiar with student's emergency plan and symptoms of low blood glucose and be able to respond appropriately.
- Allow students adequate time to eat/drink and have access to the bathroom as requested.
- Inform parents of changes in student's health.
- Monitor student after treatment for low blood glucose.
- Give parent advance notice of changes in school routine where food and activity is involved (such as field trips, special events).
- Ensure students have access to their diabetes equipment which may include their cell phone.

# KIDS SAY: Ways to Support your Student with Diabetes [poster](#)

- At the start of the year please check in with me and let me know you're here to help and ask me what support I would like
- My cell phone is a medical device so please don't take it away
- My devices often beep; this can be embarrassing for me. Please don't make it a big thing
- Sometimes I need to eat in class to treat my diabetes





# KIDS SAY...



- If my blood sugars are high I may need to use the washrooms more often
- I am more than just a blood sugar number. Sometimes it can be frustrating when people ask me ‘what’s your number’ too often.
- Please have a plan to inform a substitute teacher of my medical alert form
- When I am low I MUST eat fast-acting sugar. I am not making unhealthy choices, I need sugar to stay alive!

# Role of the Family

- Provide information to the school.
- Provide copy of the treatment plan.
- Ensure child has a Medical Alert identification.
- Provide snacks, lunch, and emergency foods.
- Provide supplies and equipment.



## **Role of Nursing Support Coordinator**

- Provide student specific training for staff.
- Develop Individual Care Plans for younger students or those cognitively unable to manage their own diabetes needs.
- Provide support to school staff, family and student.

## **Role of Public Health Nurse**

- General diabetes teaching – staff and student's peers (in consultation with family).
- Train selected staff (2-3) in Glucagon administration.
- Serve as consultant through school year.

# Diabetes Support Plan

# Resources

- ▶ Diabetes and Students in BC <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/program-management/safe-caring-and-orderly-schools/diabetes?keyword=diabetes&keyword=in&keyword=schools>
- ▶ BCCH Endocrinology & Diabetes Unit <http://endodiab.bcchildrens.ca>
- ▶ Child Health BC  
[https://www.childhealthbc.ca/sites/default/files/diabetes\\_care\\_in\\_the\\_school\\_setting\\_evidence-informed\\_key\\_components\\_care\\_elements\\_and\\_competencies\\_september\\_2013.pdf](https://www.childhealthbc.ca/sites/default/files/diabetes_care_in_the_school_setting_evidence-informed_key_components_care_elements_and_competencies_september_2013.pdf)
- ▶ Diabetes Canada <https://www.diabetes.ca/about-diabetes/kids,-teens---diabetes>
- ▶ Canadian Paediatric Society <https://www.diabetesatschool.ca/schools> see resources for school staff, level 1, 2 and 3 [here](#) and this [poster](#)

# Any Questions?