



# Diabetes Education

Recognizing and treating **HIGH BLOOD SUGAR** before it becomes too high is very important in preventing possible life threatening emergencies. Also, preventing frequent high blood sugars will significantly lower hemoglobin A1c and the complications that are associated with diabetes.



## Symptoms of High Blood Sugar (Hyperglycemia):

Ideally, you will know your blood sugar is elevated before feeling these symptoms. However, if it is a time that you are not testing and you start to feel these symptoms, check your blood sugar to make sure it is not high.

- ✓ Increased Thirst
- ✓ Increased Urination
- ✓ Blurred Vision
- ✓ Excessive hunger
- ✓ Abdominal pain
- ✓ Drowsy
- ✓ Frequent burping
- ✓ Nausea & vomiting

## High Blood Sugar

High Blood Sugar also known as Hyperglycemia:

### Hyperglycemia is Defined As Blood Sugar:

- Greater than 130mg/dL **BEFORE** a meal
- Greater than 180mg/dL 2 hours **AFTER** a meal

### Causes of High Blood Sugar:

- Skipping diabetes medicine or not taking the right amount
- Not enough activity or exercise
- Eating too much; especially carbohydrates
- Stress (*physical or emotional*)
- Illness
- Infection

### Managing and Treating High Blood Sugars:

- Check blood sugar within 1-2 hours of the high reading
- **CALL** your doctor right away if blood sugar levels are above targeted range two days in a row
- Keep a blood sugar log to see patterns or trends
- Follow your meal plan
- Drink plenty of water every day
- Ask your doctor if your medicine needs to be adjusted
- See your doctor at least twice a year, and more often if blood sugars are not controlled
- People with type 1 should check for ketones in their urine; especially if they are type 1
- Follow your doctor's instructions for when to check ketones in your urine (*usually when it's above 300 mg/dL*) and how to treat

More Information 

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# High Blood Sugar

## Check For Ketones:

1. To check for ketones your glucose meter may have the option to check for ketones in your blood.
2. The urine is the **MOST** common way to check for ketones.

## Diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA):

Diabetic ketoacidosis is more common in people with type 1 diabetes. But this can also happen, but less frequently, in people who have type 2 diabetes. DKA happens when the brain runs out of glucose (*sugar*) to use and starts using fat for energy.

The brain needs mainly glucose for energy to function normally. When insulin is not bringing glucose into the cells, glucose in the blood will rise. Also, glucose is not reaching the brain, and the brain starts using fat for energy. It can only do this for a short time before it starts making ketones, which is made when fat breaks down. If left untreated ketone levels in the blood increase that could lead to a **DIABETES COMA** also known as diabetic ketoacidosis. This is a life threatening condition that requires a 911 call.

## Warning Signs of Diabetic Ketoacidosis:

- ✓ High blood sugar (*greater than 300 mg/dL*)
- ✓ Fruity acidic breath
- ✓ Abdominal pain or cramping
- ✓ Rapid breathing
- ✓ Shortness of breath
- ✓ Moderate to large urine ketones

Call your doctor immediately or go to the emergency room if you experience ONE or MORE of these symptoms.

## Check For Ketones:

To check for ketones your glucose meter may have the option to check for ketones in your blood.

If not, your doctor should have given you ketone strips. These are dipped in a sample of your urine when it is suspected that your blood sugar is high. After dipping the urine stick, check the color against the color on the bottle. If the color on your urine stick matches the one on the bottle for ketones, you are spilling moderate to large ketones in your urine and should **CALL** your doctor **IMMEDIATELY!**

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