

# Managing Diabetes in the School Setting

Alabama State Department of Education  
Alabama Board of Nursing

## Diabetes Mellitus: Type I Diabetes

- Previously called Insulin-dependent or Juvenile Onset Diabetes
- Pancreas does not make enough insulin (a hormone secreted by the pancreas)
  - If the body has too little or no insulin then glucose cannot enter the cells of the body to be used for energy
- Symptoms include:**
  - ❖ Fatigue
  - ❖ Increased thirst
  - ❖ Frequent urination
- Treatment includes:**
  - ❖ Blood glucose monitoring
  - ❖ Administration of long and/or rapid-acting insulin
  - ❖ Diet, exercise and rest

## Diabetes Mellitus: Type II Diabetes

- Previously called Adult Onset Diabetes
- Insulin resistance
  - ❖ Decreased ability of insulin (a hormone secreted by the pancreas) to move glucose (blood sugar) from our bloodstream into our cells.
- Risk factors include:
  - ❖ Family history
  - ❖ Lifestyle choices (diet, exercise, obesity)
- Treatment includes:
  - ❖ Blood glucose monitoring
  - ❖ Diet management and exercise
  - ❖ Oral medications (Glucophage, Actos, etc.)
  - ❖ Insulin

## Hypoglycemia (Low blood sugar)

- Blood glucose less than or equal to 80 mg/dl OR symptoms
- Usual symptoms of hypoglycemia:**
  - ❖ Shaky or jittery
  - ❖ Sweaty
  - ❖ Hungry
  - ❖ Pale
  - ❖ Headache
  - ❖ Blurry vision
  - ❖ Sleepy
  - ❖ Dizzy

## Hypoglycemia: Treatment

- Can occur very quickly
- Must be treated immediately
- Prevention:
  - Regular blood sugar monitoring/in classroom if necessary
  - Meals/Snacks eaten on regular schedule/not skipped/in classroom if necessary
- Treatment of hypoglycemia:
  - ❖ If student is able to swallow and follow directions, treat with a fast-acting carbohydrate (CHO) source.
    - Mini box of juice
    - 8 oz. carton low or no-fat milk
    - ½ can soda (sweetened)
    - 3-4 glucose tablets
- Remain with student until he/she is able to safely resume normal activity.

## Hypoglycemia: Emergency

- If student becomes unconscious: EMERGENCY
  - ❖ Student will be *unable to swallow and follow directions*
  - ❖ Turn student onto his/her side
  - ❖ Remain with the student until the on-site School Nurse/Trained Unlicensed Diabetic Assistant arrives OR until EMS arrives
  - ❖ If no School Nurse of Trained Unlicensed Diabetic Assistant available - CALL 9-1-1
- Treatment of EMERGENCY hypoglycemia:
  - ❖ Administer Glucagon injection (if ordered by physician)
  - ❖ Glucagon is a hormone that when injected raises the blood sugar quickly
  - ❖ Glucagon *may only be administered* by a School Nurse or a Trained Unlicensed Diabetic Assistant
- Students must be accompanied by a School Nurse or Unlicensed Diabetic Assistant or Parent if participating on a Field Trip or Extracurricular Activity

## Hyperglycemia (High blood sugar)

- Blood glucose greater than or equal to 300 mg/dl OR symptoms
- Usual symptoms of hyperglycemia:
  - ❖ Increased thirst, dry mouth
  - ❖ Frequent or increased urination
  - ❖ Change in appetite, nausea
  - ❖ Blurry vision
  - ❖ Fatigue

## Hyperglycemia: Emergency

- If student becomes unconscious: EMERGENCY
  - ❖ Student will be *unable to swallow and follow directions*
  - ❖ Turn student onto his/her side
  - ❖ Remain with the student until the on-site School Nurse/Trained Unlicensed Diabetic Assistant arrives OR until EMS arrives
  - ❖ If no School Nurse of Trained Unlicensed Diabetic Assistant available - CALL 9-1-1
- Treatment of EMERGENCY hyperglycemia:
  - ❖ School Nurse or a Trained Unlicensed Diabetic Assistant will follow physician orders regarding administration of insulin/medication
- Students must be accompanied by a School Nurse or Unlicensed Diabetic Assistant or Parent if participating on a Field Trip or Extracurricular Activity