

# BE PREPARED

If loss of consciousness, inability to swallow glucose treatment or seizures are experienced or observed, **immediately**:

- Give glucagon as instructed by a healthcare provider
- Call 911
- Notify a healthcare provider
- Suspend insulin delivery

▶ **Never leave a person who is hypoglycemic unattended**

## EVALUATE

Once an episode of hypoglycemia has been experienced, it is important to understand what factors might have contributed to it and what, if anything, can be done to prevent a future hypoglycemic episode.

## CHECK YOUR SETTINGS

### Review your pump settings

- Is the correct basal program active?
- Is the temp basal (if active) correct?
- Is the time set properly?
- Are target blood glucose levels correct?
- Is the insulin sensitivity factor (or correction factor) correct?
- Is the insulin-to-carb ratio correct?

▶ **Consult your healthcare provider for guidance about adjusting your pump settings appropriately**

### Review recent activity

#### Physical activity

- Has your exercise been unusually long or strenuous?
- Have you been unusually physically active (e.g. extra walking, housework, heavy or repetitive tasks, lifting or carrying)?
- Did you use a decreased temp basal during this activity?
- Did you consume carbohydrates before, during and/or after the activity?

#### Meals/Snacks

- Did you count carbohydrates correctly – including subtracting significant fibre?
- Did you bolus with food?
- Did you consume alcohol?

**References:** 1. Mayo Clinic. Hypoglycemia. Accessed August 2019 at <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/hypoglycemia/symptoms-causes/syc-20373685>  
2. Yale JF, Paty B and P Senior. *Canadian Journal of Diabetes* 2018;42:S104–S108. 3. Wherrett DK, Ho J, Huot C, et al. *Canadian Journal of Diabetes*. 2018;42:S234–246.

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# HYPOGLYCEMIA TREATMENT AND PREVENTION

The importance  
of recognizing  
and managing **low**  
blood sugar levels

## THE BASICS

Hypoglycemia is a condition that is caused by low levels of blood sugar (glucose) – the body's main source for energy.<sup>1</sup>

Hypoglycemia is defined by<sup>2</sup>:

- The appearance of symptoms related to low blood sugar levels

OR

- Blood glucose levels that are less than 4 mmol/L

## KNOW THE SIGNS

Signs and symptoms of hypoglycemia include<sup>2</sup>:



**Shakiness**



**Hunger**



**Dizziness**



**Weakness**



**Headache**



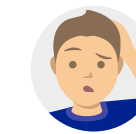
**Tingling**



**Cold, clammy skin**



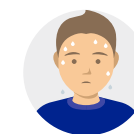
**Drowsiness**



**Confusion**



**Fatigue**



**Unexplained sweating**



**Personality change/abnormal behaviour**



**Blurred vision**



**Rapid heartbeat**

Hypoglycemia is a serious condition. Because the brain requires glucose to function properly, hypoglycemia can result in coma, seizures or loss of consciousness, when left unmanaged.<sup>1,2</sup>



This is why it is important to recognize the signs/symptoms and treat promptly. Continue reading for hypoglycemia treatment recommendations.

The information in this leaflet is for educational purposes only and does not replace the guidance of your healthcare professional.





# TAKE ACTION

## MILD OR MODERATE HYPOGLYCEMIA

### FOR ADULTS<sup>2</sup>

- ✓ **Verify and check blood glucose levels**
- If blood glucose is less than 4 mmol/L:**
- 1** Treat with 15 grams of carbohydrate 
- 2** Recheck blood glucose levels in 15 minutes 

#### Examples of fast-acting 15g carbohydrate include:

-  3–4 glucose tablets
-  1 tablespoon or 3 packets of sugar dissolved in water
-  2/3 cups of juice or regular soft drink
-  1 tablespoon of honey

#### If blood glucose is less than 4 mmol/L:

Retreat as above and then check again 

#### If blood glucose is greater than 4 mmol/L:

 Follow with a meal or snack of carbohydrates and protein

**Do not drive** if blood glucose levels are below 4.0 mmol/L.

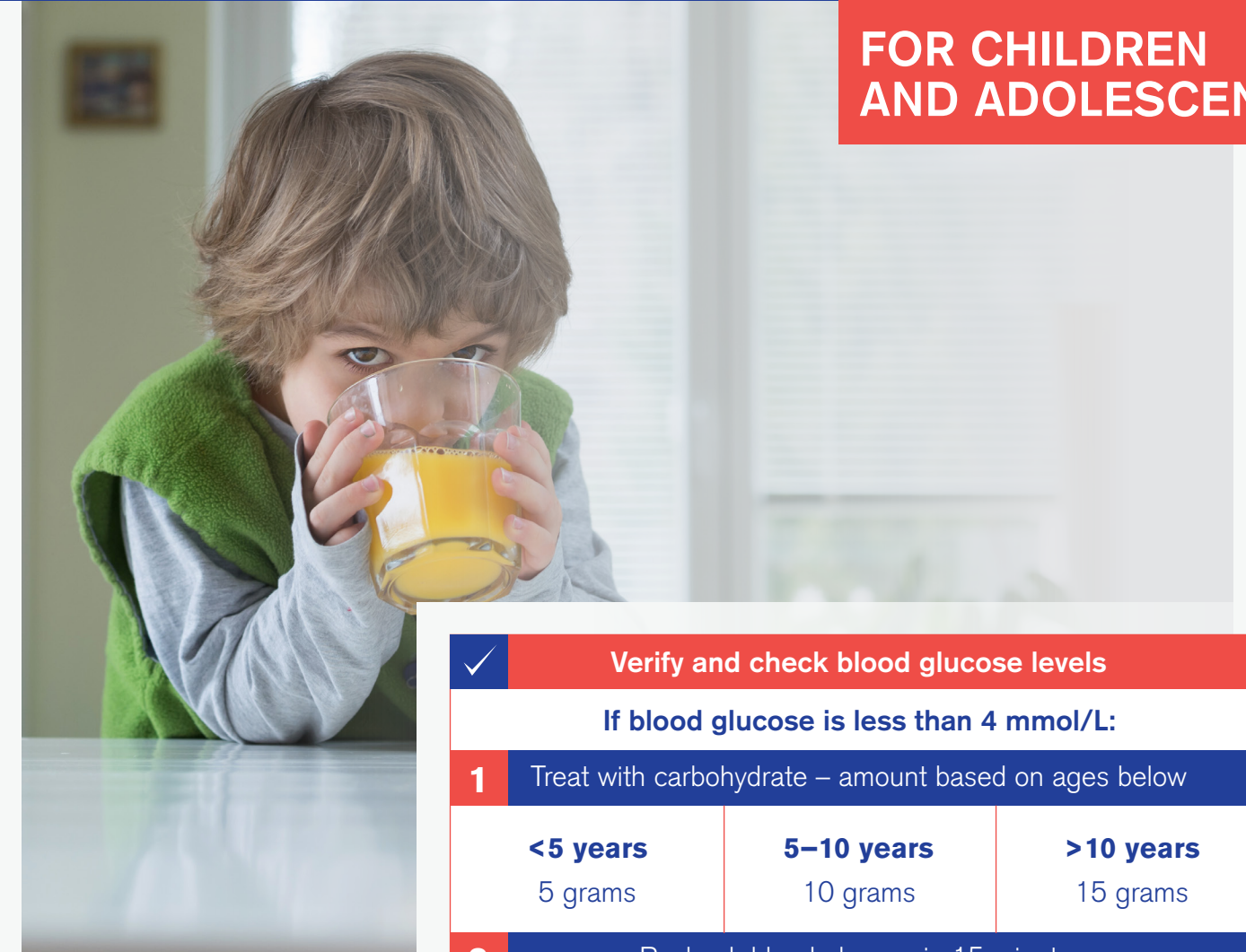
**Do not** begin driving until:

- Blood glucose levels have begun to normalize (i.e. are  $\geq 5$  mmol/L) after proper treatment described above
- 40 minutes have passed
  - It takes time to regain proper judgement and reflexes after experiencing hypoglycemia

Even if blood glucose levels cannot be checked, **do not** wait to treat symptoms of hypoglycemia.






### FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS<sup>2,3</sup>



- ✓ **Verify and check blood glucose levels**
- If blood glucose is less than 4 mmol/L:**
- 1** Treat with carbohydrate – amount based on ages below

<5 years	5–10 years	>10 years
5 grams	10 grams	15 grams

- 2** Recheck blood glucose in 15 minutes
- If blood glucose is less than 4 mmol/L, retreat as above and check again**

Example sources of carbohydrates	Carbohydrate amount (by age group)		
	<5 years	5–10 years	>10 years
 Glucose tablet (4g)	1	2 or 3	4
 Dextrose tablet (3g)	2	3	5
 Apple or orange juice; regular soft drink; sweet beverage	40 mL	85 mL	125 mL