

**DIABETES: HYPERGLYCEMIA (HIGH BLOOD SUGAR)**

**PATIENT/FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET**

**What is hyperglycemia?**

Hyperglycemia means your blood sugar level is higher than the target level you have set with your physician. Most individuals with diabetes have a target fasting blood sugar level of 70-130 mg/dl.

**What are the symptoms of hyperglycemia?**

Common symptoms include:

- extreme thirst
- frequent urination
- dry skin
- nausea
- hunger
- blurred vision
- drowsiness

Symptoms generally develop gradually. Not everyone will experience all of the symptoms mentioned.

**How do I treat hyperglycemia?**

Treatment of hyperglycemia depends on the cause:

Cause	Treatment
<b>Food:</b> Too much food or too much carbohydrate eaten at one time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with your dietitian to adjust your meal plan</li> </ul>
<b>Medication:</b> Too low a dose of medication; the wrong type of medication or too little insulin may be the problem.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treatment related to medication must be discussed with your physician.</li> </ul>
<b>Illness:</b> The stress of illness raises blood sugar levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not stop taking medications to treat your diabetes unless otherwise directed by your physician. Your physician may even increase your dose of medication during periods of illness.</li> </ul>
<b>Dehydration:</b> Not drinking enough fluids to meet the needs of your body.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink plenty of carbohydrate-free fluids (i.e. water, caffeine-free diet beverages, low sodium broth).</li> </ul>

## What can I do to prevent hyperglycemia?

- Take your medication(s) for diabetes as directed by your physician.
- Follow the meal plan you developed with your dietitian.
- Monitor your blood sugar level as directed by your physician.
- Measure your blood sugar more often (such as, every 2-4 hours) when you are ill.
- If you have type 1 diabetes, check your urine for ketones. If the reading is “small” or above, call your physician immediately.
- Be sure to let all of your physicians know you have diabetes. Some medications can raise blood sugar.

## How can I get more information?

Organization	Phone
Healthy Living with Diabetes Program at Greenwich Hospital	203.863.2954
Greenwich Hospital Diabetes Educator	203-863-3929
American Diabetes Association	800.342-2383
Web Resources	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Diabetes Association <a href="http://www.diabetes.org">www.diabetes.org</a>	
<input type="checkbox"/> National Diabetes Education Program <a href="http://www.ndep.nih.gov">www.ndep.nih.gov</a>	

## Notes:

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*For more Patient Education Fact Sheets, see the Greenwich Hospital web site at [www.greenhosp.org](http://www.greenhosp.org) and click on Patients & Visitors, then Patient Education*



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