

Hypoglycemia: Complementary/Alternative Medicine

Blood glucose level below 50 mg/dl

A normal response curve during the first two to three hours of a glucose tolerance test, followed by a decrease of 20 mg or more below the fasting glucose level during the final hours of the test, with symptoms developing during the decrease

QUICK REVIEW

- Hypoglycemia is a complex set of symptoms caused by faulty carbohydrate metabolism induced by a diet too high in refined sugars.
- When all is considered (especially cost), assessing symptoms remains the most useful way to diagnose hypoglycemia in many cases.
- There exists a substantial amount of information that hypoglycemia is caused by an excessive intake of refined carbohydrates.
- *Syndrome X* has been introduced to describe a cluster of abnormalities that owe their existence largely to a high intake of refined carbohydrates, leading to the development of hypoglycemia, excessive insulin secretion, and glucose intolerance, followed by diminished insulin sensitivity leading to high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol levels, obesity, and, ultimately, Type 11 diabetes.
- When glucose levels are low, as occurs during hypoglycemia, it can result in dizziness, headache, clouding of vision, blunted mental acuity, emotional instability, confusion, and abnormal behavior. Several controlled studies of psychiatric patients and habitually violent and impulsive criminals have shown that hypoglycemia is a common fording. Hypoglycemia has been shown to be a common precipitating factor in migraine headaches since 1933. Dietary carbohydrates play a central role in the cause, prevention, and treatment of hypoglycemia.

Problems with carbohydrates begin when they are refined, which strips them of associated nutrients and increases their rate of absorption. Chromium is vital to proper blood sugar control, as it functions in the body as a key constituent of the *glucose tolerance factor*. Alcohol consumption severely stresses blood sugar control and is often a contributing factor to hypoglycemia.

TREATMENT SUMMARY

The primary treatment of hypoglycemia is the use of dietary therapy to stabilize blood sugar levels. Reactive hypoglycemia is not a disease; it is simply a complex set of symptoms caused by faulty carbohydrate metabolism induced by a diet too high in refined carbohydrates.

Diet

All simple, processed, and concentrated carbohydrates must be avoided, while the consumption of complex-carbohydrate, high-fiber foods should be emphasized. Legumes should be consumed regularly. Frequent small meals may be more effective in stabilizing blood sugar levels. Alcohol consumption must be avoided, as it can cause hypoglycemia.

Nutritional Supplements

The recommendations for the daily intake levels of vitamins and minerals given in SUPPLEMENTARY MEASURES are especially important in treating hypoglycemia, as there are many essential nutrients critical to proper carbohydrate metabolism. The recommended levels are most easily attained by taking a multiple vitamin and mineral formula. Chromium (200-400 mcg per day) is critically important.

Exercise

Follow an exercise program that elevates your heart rate to at least sixty percent of maximum for one-half hour three times per week. For a full discussion, see A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE.