

## ACUTE COMPLICATIONS

### *Hypoglycemia (Low Blood Glucose):*

Hypoglycemia is when blood glucose levels are below target. See table below for targets depending on age.

Children and adults with diabetes	Less than 70 mg/dL
Pregnant women	Less than 60 mg/dL
Children and adults without diabetes	Less than 70 mg/dL

If a person has a low blood glucose, he or she needs to eat or drink 7 to 15 grams of high glycemic carbohydrate (15 grams = 6 hard candies, 4 oz glass of juice, 4 glucose tablets). Then, he or she needs to re-check blood glucose in 15 minutes to be sure levels went back up. If reading does not come back up, he or she needs to repeat the process until it is at a safe level (>70 mg/dL). Once the reading has come up, he or she can have a 15 gram low glycemic carbohydrate with a lean protein or healthy fat (ex. apple with 2 tablespoons of peanut butter).

### *Hyperglycemia (High Blood Glucose):*

Hyperglycemia is when blood glucose levels are above target. If someone with diabetes has 2 consecutive readings above 300 mg/dL (> 200 mg/dL if pregnant and >250 mg/dL if non-pregnant and on insulin pump therapy), he or she should check for ketones. Then, he or she should drink water and/or sugar-free fluids and take medication as instructed (if applicable).

### *Diabetic Ketoacidosis (DKA):*

This occurs when people with diabetes do not have enough insulin to use glucose correctly so they begin to burn fat for energy. Breaking down fat creates ketones, which in excess, can make the body very acidic and can lead to a diabetic coma or death. DKA can be caused by improper dosing of insulin, using expired or spoiled insulin, being ill, or not eating enough carbohydrates. Symptoms of DKA include abdominal cramping, nausea, vomiting, decreased energy, excessive sleepiness, difficulties breathing and fruity odor. A person that is symptomatic of DKA, or who is having 2 consecutive high glucose readings, should test ketones. If ketones are moderate or large, or if he or she is vomiting, he or she needs to be taken to the emergency room.