

Partners in Quality Care

August 2012

Diabetes mellitus or simply, Diabetes, is a group of diseases characterized by high blood glucose levels that result from problems in the body's ability to produce and/or use insulin. Diabetes means that blood glucose (blood sugar) is too high. Type 1 diabetes - the body does not make insulin. Insulin helps the body use glucose from food for energy. People with type 1 need to take insulin every day. Type 2 diabetes - the body does not make or use insulin well. People with type 2 often need to take pills or insulin. Type 2 is the most common form of diabetes. Diabetes is a serious disease. It affects almost every part of the body. In your role as an In-home aide, you can help your client manage their diabetes and look for symptoms to report to your supervisor.



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For more information on AHHC's endorsed risk management and insurance program, visit:
<http://www.homeandhospicecare.org/insurance/home.html>

What you will learn:

- Facts about Diabetes
- High and low blood sugar and what to look for
- Symptoms of Diabetes
- The Aide's Role in working with a client with diabetes.

Diabetes Facts:

Among U.S. residents aged 65 years and older, 10.9 million, or 26.9%, had diabetes in 2010.

About 215,000 people younger than 20 years had diabetes (type 1 or type 2) in the United States in 2010.

About 1.9 million people aged 20 years or older were newly diagnosed with diabetes in 2010 in the United States.

Diabetes is the leading cause of kidney failure, nontraumatic lower limb amputations, and new cases of blindness among adults in the United States.

Diabetes is a major cause of heart disease and stroke

Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in the United States

Meals- Healthful Food Choices include:

- Eat lots of vegetables and fruits. Try picking from the rainbow of colors available to maximize variety.
- Eat non-starchy vegetables such as spinach, carrots, broccoli or green beans with meals.
- Choose whole grain foods over processed grain products. Try brown rice with your stir fry or whole wheat spaghetti with your favorite pasta sauce.
- Include dried beans (like kidney or pinto beans) and lentils into your meals.
- Include fish in your meals 2-3 times a week.
- Choose lean meats like cuts of beef and pork that end in "loin" such as pork loin and sirloin. Remove the skin from chicken and turkey.
- Choose non-fat dairy such as skim milk, non-fat yogurt and non-fat cheese.
- Choose water and calorie-free "diet" drinks instead of regular soda, fruit punch, sweet tea and other sugar-sweetened drinks.
- Choose liquid oils for cooking instead of solid fats that can be high in saturated and *trans* fats. Remember that fats are high in calories. If you're trying to lose weight, watch your portion sizes of added fats.
- Cut back on high calorie snack foods and desserts like chips, cookies, cakes, and full-fat ice cream.
- Eating too much of even healthful foods can lead to weight gain. Watch your portion sizes.

Meal preparation is an important part of the aide's role in ensuring client's receive a healthy diet.

Symptoms of Diabetes

- **Unexplained weight loss**
- Extreme hunger
- **Sudden vision changes**
- Tingling or numbness in the hands and feet
- **Feeling very tired much of the time**
- Very dry skin
- **Frequent urination**
- Sores that heal slowly
- **More infections than usual**
- Irritability, mood changes, and/or feeling edgy
- **Feeling sick to your stomach and vomiting**
- Flu like symptoms in children
- **Recurring skin, gum, vaginal or bladder infections**
- Excessive thirst

Treatment for Diabetes

- **Healthy Eating**
- **Physical Activity**
- **Medication - Insulin injections and/or medications taken by mouth**

Hypo (low) Hyper (high) glycemia

- **When the blood sugar becomes too high or too low, serious problems can arise**
- **Hyperglycemia is high blood sugar**
- **Hypoglycemia (sometimes called an insulin reaction) is low blood sugar**

How Do Our Bodies Work?

- Food that we eat is broken down in the stomach and bowels to form glucose
- The glucose is absorbed into the blood and carried to the cells in the body
- The glucose is then burned to produce energy
- Any glucose not used is stored in the cells

Insulin and its Role:

- Insulin is produced by the pancreas which is an organ located behind the stomach
- The insulin helps the glucose get into the body's cells
- If there is not enough insulin, or the body does not use the insulin correctly, the glucose stays in the bloodstream
- **High levels of glucose in the bloodstream causes diabetes**

Hyperglycemia Can be caused by:

- Not taking insulin or not taking enough insulin
- The insulin in the body is not working properly
- Eating too much
- Less exercise than planned
- Stress
- Illness

Symptoms of Hyperglycemia: (high blood sugar)

- High blood sugar
- The urine has high sugar levels
- Increased thirst
- Frequent urination

Hypoglycemia can be caused by:

- Taking too much insulin
- Not eating enough
- Not eating on time
- Exercising too much

Symptoms of Hypoglycemia: (low blood sugar)

- Pale and sweating skin
- Dizziness and/or shakiness
- Headache
- Hunger
- Confusion
- Sudden mood or behavior changes
- Clumsy or jerky movements
- May appear "drunk"

The Aide's Role:

- Report any signs and symptoms of diabetes to the case manager or supervisor
- Encourage the patient to follow their prescribed diet. Be sure to know what type of diet to prepare and how to prepare it if meal preparation is one of the assigned tasks for you on the care plan.
- Report any deviations from diet e.g. eating large amounts of sugary food, frequent alcohol use
- Encourage/remind patient to take medications as ordered
- Report missed medication doses to case manager
- Report any signs of improper storage of medications e.g. insulin sitting in direct sunlight or in the freezer
- Inform your supervisor if patient is not eating or has diarrhea, vomiting etc.
- Inform your supervisor if patient is "sick"
- Report any signs and symptoms of hypo/hyperglycemia immediately
- Report any new shortness of breath immediately
- Encourage patient to keep regular MD appointments
- Provide good foot care:
 - Wash feet carefully and dry between the toes well
 - Inspect feet for blisters, cuts, redness, swelling
 - Check for hot or cold feet
 - Encourage patient to wear socks and comfortable shoes and avoid bare feet
 - Avoid restrictive garters or knee high stockings
 - Avoid things that increase skin dryness such as hot water, bubble bath, scented soaps
 - Use moisturizing soaps and skin cream

Bonus **National Falls Prevention Awareness Day!**

This special day will be observed the first day of Fall (September 22 in 2012) to promote and increase public awareness about how to prevent and reduce falls among older adults. Everyone is at risk and risk for falls increases as we age. This increased risk of falling is likely the result of changes that come with aging, plus other medical conditions such as arthritis, cataracts or hip surgery. Let your supervisor know if you observe your client having problems with walking or dizziness or other signs that you client could fall.

Newsletter Resources: AGS foundation for Health in Aging; American Diabetes Association; National Council on Aging; AHHC Caring Connection - Helping Patient's to Manage Diabetes; National Diabetes Education program - NDEP is a partnership of the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and more than 200 public and private organizations; CDC National Diabetes Fact Sheet 2011

Name: _____

1. High levels of _____ in the bloodstream causes diabetes. (Fill in the blank)
2. _____ which is produced by the pancreas helps glucose get into the body's cells (Fill in the blank)
3. If there is not enough insulin, or the body does not use the insulin correctly, the glucose stays in the bloodstream. (Check True or False)

True False
4. Being overweight does not increase your risk for diabetes. (Check True or False)

True False
5. A healthy meal plan for people with diabetes is generally the same as a healthy diet for anyone. (Check True or False)

True False
6. The Aide's Role in working with a client with diabetes includes all of the following except: (check the correct answer or answers)
 - a) Reporting any signs and symptoms of diabetes to the case manager or supervisor
 - b) Inform the supervisor or case manager if your client is not eating or has diarrhea, vomiting or is eating large amounts of sugary foods.
 - c) Encourage the client to wear socks and comfortable shoes and avoid bare feet
 - d) Encourage the patient to keep regular MD appointments
 - e) Use plenty of hot water and bubble bath in the bath
 - f) Inspect feet for blisters, cuts, redness, swelling and report to the supervisor if observed.
7. _____ is the term for high blood sugar and _____ is the term for low blood sugar. (Fill in the blanks)
8. Hypoglycemia can be caused by: (check the correct answer or answers):
 - a) Taking too much insulin
 - b) Not eating enough
 - c) Not eating on time
 - d) Exercising too much
 - e) all of the above

9. There is no treatment for diabetes. (Check True or False)

True False

10. A person with Hypoglycemia may appear confused or “drunk”. (Check True or False)

True False

11 and 12- Bonus Questions-

11. Case Study- Discuss with your supervisor from the list below what actions she would direct you to take in the type of situation described below and how to prioritize.

You are taking care of a client with diabetes and you walk into the client’s home to start care for the morning and your client is acting odd and appears confused and shaky. Your client’s breakfast ,which was prepared by the daughter before she went to work, is on the table and has not been eaten, you also notice on the medication log that the daughter keeps that the patient had her insulin injection earlier this morning.

Actions:

_____ Tell your client that it is time for the bath/shower to get started and be sure to help them get up slowly since they are dizzy

_____ Have the patient eat or drink orange juice, soda, or other sugar sweetened food product (i.e. piece of candy, other sources of sugar or simple carbohydrates also work well to treat hypoglycemia, such as fruit juice, hard candies, or pretzels or crackers)

_____ Call your supervisor and report what is happening

_____ Tell the client that since they are not feeling well, you will come back later in the day

_____ Call the patient’s daughter to report what is happening

_____ Document what you observed

12. This years (2012)Falls Prevention Awareness Day is on what date?

_____ (fill in the blank)