

Complications of Diabetes:

Below are potential short-term complications of Diabetes, symptoms of each complication, and treatment.

Complication	Cause	Symptoms	Treatment
Low Blood Sugar - Hypoglycemia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too little food • Too much insulin • Activity/exercise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shaking • Sweating • Weakness • Mood changes • Dizziness • Confusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast acting carbohydrate • Glucagon
High Blood Sugar - Hyperglycemia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too little insulin • Illness/stress • Poor eating habits • Poor drinking habits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry mouth • Hunger • Tiredness • Blurry vision • Peeing a lot • Weight loss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insulin dosing • Increased activity
Ketones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too little insulin • Illness/stress • Poor eating habits • Poor drinking habits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nausea • Stomachache • Fruity/medicine smelling breath 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insulin dosing • Fluid intake
DKA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too little insulin • Illness/stress • Poor eating habits • Poor drinking habits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nausea/vomiting • Not peeing • Fast, deep breathing • Confusion • Exhaustion • Unconsciousness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY OR GO TO THE NEAREST EMERGENCY ROOM

Please share this information with your family and friends and discuss your symptoms. There may be times when you have symptoms and don't notice them yourself.

Ways to prevent short-term complications:

- Count carbohydrates as accurately as possible using reliable sources of information like food labels
- Eat regularly
- Don't take insulin any more often than 2 hours
- Know what your blood sugar is before activity and check in regularly while being active
- Keep a close eye on your blood sugars to make sure they stay in range
- Take all doses of insulin as instructed by your provider
- Check for ketones anytime your glucose is above 250 or you are not feeling well, even if your blood sugar is not above 250

A word about long-term complications

Long-term complications are health problems that can happen in people who have had diabetes **and** high blood sugars levels for many years. These types of issues are more likely to happen to people with diabetes whose blood sugars have been above range for 7-10 years.

The 4 most common parts of the body to be affected by high sugar levels are:

1. Eyes (retinopathy) – can cause blindness
2. Kidneys (nephropathy) – can cause kidney failure and lead to dialysis
3. Nerves (neuropathy) – can lead to amputations, erectile dysfunction and stomach problems
4. Heart and blood vessels (cardiovascular) – putting you a high risk for heart attack and stroke

Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness, kidney failure, non-traumatic amputations. Your provider's focus will be on preventing these health problems by regular follow-up and routine tests. You can do your part by following your diabetes care plan, staying active, eating a balanced diet and not smoking. Starting healthy habits when you are young makes them easier to continue for your entire life.