



Calderdale and Huddersfield

NHS Foundation Trust

Patient Information Leaflet- Same Day Emergency Center (SDEC) Hyperglycaemia (High Blood Sugar)

What is Hyperglycaemia?

Hyperglycaemia is the medical term for high blood sugar levels. Glucose is the body's main source of energy and comes from the food we eat. Insulin, produced by the pancreas, helps move glucose from the blood into the body's cells. When there is not enough insulin, or the body cannot use insulin properly (as in diabetes), glucose builds up in the bloodstream instead of entering the cells. This leads to high blood sugar levels.

Common symptoms

- Increased thirst
- Frequent urination
- Tiredness
- Blurred vision
- Headaches
- If severe, hyperglycaemia can lead to diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA), where harmful acids called ketones build up.

How did this happen?

- Diabetes (Type 1 or Type 2)
- Missed or incorrect insulin/medication doses
- Eating too much sugary or high-carbohydrate food
- Illness or infection
- Stress (physical or emotional)
- Lack of physical activity
- Certain medications (e.g. steroids)
- Risk factors include being overweight, having a family history of diabetes and a sedentary lifestyle.

Treatment options

Lifestyle changes: Healthy diet (low in refined sugars) and regular exercise. Benefits: Improves blood sugar control. Risks: Low risk if done appropriately.

Medications (oral tablets): Help the body use insulin better or reduce glucose production. Benefits: Effective for Type 2 diabetes. Risks: Possible side effects include low blood sugar or stomach upset.

Insulin therapy: Used when the body cannot produce enough insulin. Benefits: Essential for controlling high glucose. Risks: Low blood sugar if too much is taken.

Fluids (especially if severe): Help reduce blood sugar levels and prevent dehydration. Benefits: Quickly improves symptoms. Risks: Minimal when monitored.

Possible complications

Short-term: Dehydration, Diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA), Hyperosmolar hyperglycaemic state (HHS).

Long-term: Damage to blood vessels, Heart disease, Kidney damage, Nerve damage (neuropathy), Eye problems (retinopathy). High sugar levels over time can damage important organs and body systems.

When should I seek help?

Seek immediate medical attention if you experience: shortness of breath, chest pain, dizziness, confusion, vomiting or severe weakness.

Contact the Same Day Emergency Centre (SDEC) if you are uncertain about medication, follow-up care or your diagnosis.

See your GP if you have persistent high blood sugar readings, ongoing symptoms such as thirst or fatigue, or issues with your medication or prescription.

Contact information

If you have concerns after leaving SDEC, please contact:

SDEC / Hospital Advice Line: _____

GP: _____

Out of hours: NHS 111

In an emergency, call 999.