

*Please talk with your physician or advanced practice provider (APP) about the blood glucose range that is best for you.*

## Diabetes: Driving Safety

If you drive, it is important to know how to manage your diabetes so that you, your passengers and others around you stay safe. Diabetes can make your blood glucose (blood sugar) levels too high or too low. This can affect your ability to focus, control the car and make good choices while driving. Driving with low blood glucose levels can be as dangerous as driving while drunk.

### Hypoglycemia (low blood glucose)

Know the signs of low blood glucose when driving:

- Nervousness and shakiness
- Dizziness, lightheadedness or fainting
- Feeling anxious, sleepy or weak
- Difficulty speaking
- Confusion
- Irritability or mood changes
- Sweating
- Hunger

### Hyperglycemia (high blood glucose)

Know the signs of high blood glucose when driving:

- Feeling hungrier
- Frequent urination
- Tiredness
- Blurred vision
- Dry skin
- Thirst

## Driving safely with diabetes

### ***Be prepared***

**Always check your blood glucose before you start driving.** Do not drive if your blood glucose is not in your safe range. Make sure you always have your diabetes supplies (such as your blood glucose meter) with you. Have snacks and fast-acting carbohydrates (sugars), such as glucose tablets, in the car within easy reach.

Do not leave home without:

- Your driver's license
- Medical ID bracelet or necklace that says you have diabetes
- ICE (In Case of Emergency) contact – keep the name and phone number of an emergency contact in your cell phone and type “ICE” in the last name
- Your list of current medications

You should plan to stop at regular times to test your blood glucose. This is very important if you are driving a long distance or over a long period of time.

### ***What to do if you feel symptoms***

- If you feel symptoms, safely pull over and check your blood glucose right away. If your blood sugar is 70 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL) or lower, follow the “Rule of 15.”
- If you do not have your meter with you and are feeling symptoms of low blood glucose, follow the “Rule of 15” until you feel better.
- “Rule of 15”
  1. Take 15 grams of fast-acting carbohydrate.
  2. Wait 15 minutes.
  3. Check your blood glucose again.
  4. Repeat steps 1 through 3 until your blood sugar is above 100 mg/dL.
- Do not start driving again until your blood sugar is above 100 mg/dL and your symptoms are gone.
- If your blood glucose is too high, make sure that you take your medication as prescribed by your physician or APP.
- If your blood glucose does not return to 100 mg/dL or higher or you do not feel well, **call 911.**

### **For more information**

American Diabetes Association

1.800.342.2383

**diabetes.org**

National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse

1.800.860.8747

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

**niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes**