

Hyperglycemia Encyclopedia Article

Hyperglycemia

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Hyperglycemîa

A condition caused by abnormally high levels of glucose, or blood sugar, in the blood, usually as the result of diabetes mellitus.

Also known as diabetic ketoacidosis, hyperglycemia develops over a period of a few days as the blood sugar levels of a diabetic child gradually rise. The first signs are frequent urination and increased thirst. The child may then show any of the following symptoms, including flushed face, dry skin, dry mouth, headache, nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain, drowsiness and lethargy, blurry vision, fruity-smelling breath, rapid heartbeat, and deep and labored breathing. Without treatment, the child can lapse into a diabetic coma and die. Treatment for hyperglycemia includes an injection of insulin, usually in combination with administration of intravenous fluids and salts.

Occurrences of hyperglycemia can be prevented by careful monitoring of the blood sugar levels, insulin injections, and a proper diet. Diabetic adolescents are especially susceptible to hyperglycemia, since hormonal levels are in flux and many adolescents exhibit erratic eating and sleeping patterns. Athletic activities can be beneficial since exercise makes use of surplus blood glucose.

For Further Study

Books

Siminerio, Linda M., and Jean Betschart. *Children with Diabetes*. Alexandria, VA: American Diabetes Association, 1986.

Slap, Gail B., and Martha M. Jablow. *Teenage Health Care*. New York: Pocket Books, 1994.

Audiovisual Recordings

Children with Special Health Needs. Cleveland, OH: Cleveland Clinic Foundation, 1993. (One 2-hour videocassette. This video-taped program covers human growth, asthma, diabetes, teenagers and mental health.)

Managing Diabetes. Cleveland, OH: Cleveland Clinic Foundation, 1993. (One 2-hour videocassette.)

Organizations

The American Diabetes Association
Address: P. O. Box 25757
1660 Duke Street



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Alexandria, VA 22314

Telephone: (800) 232-3472

The Joslin Diabetes Center

Address: One Joslin Place

Boston, MA 02215

Telephone: (617) 732-2400

The Juvenile Diabetes Foundation

Address: 432 Park Avenue South

New York, NY 10016

Telephone: (800) 223-1138