

CARING FOR PEOPLE WITH DIABETES

TIPS FOR FIRST RESPONDERS



Helping people with diabetes requires additional attention during times of conflict/ war and natural disasters. Here are some of the most critical issues to look for when caring for someone with diabetes.

1 WATCH OUT FOR LOW BLOOD GLUCOSE (HYPOGLYCEMIA)



Know the signs and symptoms, prevent when possible, treat appropriately, and be mindful of the need for slightly higher than usual glucose targets given the lability of times of conflict/ war and natural disasters

Signs and symptoms of hypoglycemia may include:

Shakiness	Nervousness	Sweating
Irritability, stubbornness or combativeness	Drowsiness	Lack of concentration
Chills and cold sweats	Impatience	Headaches
Fast heart beats	Confusion	Passing out

2 PROPER HYDRATION



- Very important for people with diabetes.
- Needs maybe even higher in an emergency.
- Dehydration is a bigger risk if their blood glucose levels rise too high (hyperglycemia).
- During hyperglycemia, more fluid intake is required.
- Plain water is ideal, or other sugar-free fluids.

3 INSULIN AND MEDICINES



Type 1 Diabetes

- People with type 1 diabetes are at the greatest risk as insulin is vital for their survival.
- If insulin is not available, the consumption of carbohydrates should be reduced as much as possible, and dehydration must be avoided.
- Once insulin is available, it should be resumed; switching of insulin type and brand may be appropriate under medical guidance.

Type 2 Diabetes

- Avoid hypoglycemia, hyperglycemia, and dehydration.
- Same as type 1 diabetes for those requiring a full insulin regimen.
- For those on agents other than insulin, when medicines are available restart cautiously accounting for changes in diet, weight, activity level, and current health status.

4 INFECTIONS



- Higher risk of developing infections of the feet.
- Feet should be inspected visually on a regular basis to look for any cuts, sores, or blisters so proper care can be obtained as quickly as possible.
- Should any of the usual signs of infection (swelling, redness, and/or discharge from a wound) be seen, immediate medical help should be obtained.

This is general guidance and clinical judgment should always be used when caring for patients with diabetes.

For more information: <https://www.DiabetesDEFA.org/>