Diabetes Management in Schools: Hypoglycemia or Low Blood Sugar

Hypoglycemia, which often cannot be prevented, is the greatest immediate danger to students with diabetes.

**Causes of hypoglycemia:**
- Administering too much insulin
- Skipping or delaying meals or snacks
- Not eating enough food as prescribed in the meal plan
- Exercising longer and more intensely
- Combination of above factors

**Signs of hypoglycemia** (varying from student to student) may include:

**Mild/Moderate Symptoms**
- Shaky
- Sleepy
- Changes in personality
- Sweaty
- dizzy
- Inability to concentrate
- Hungry
- Confused
- Weak
- Pale
- Disoriented
- Lethargic
- Headache
- Uncoordinated
- Changed behavior
- Blurry vision
- Irritable or nervous

**Severe Symptoms**
- Inability to swallow
- Seizure or convulsions
- Unconscious

**Treatment of Hypoglycemia**

Mild/Moderate Symptoms
- 3 to 4 glucose tablets
- 3 tsp glucose gel
- 4 oz. juice
- 6 oz. non-diet soda

Severe Symptoms
- Position the student on his/her side
- Contact the school nurse or trained diabetes personnel
- Administer glucagon, as prescribed
- Call 911, state it is a hypoglycemia emergency
- Call student’s parents

If a student with diabetes complains of feeling low or not feeling well, send somebody with them to the nurse’s office. Sending a student who is low alone could be dangerous if the student loses consciousness.