

New ACE survey shows people with type 2 diabetes experience low blood sugar during typical daily activities

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New survey data released today at the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists (AACE) 20th Annual Meeting and Clinical Congress reveal that more than half (55%) of people with type 2 diabetes across the country report they have experienced hypoglycemia, or low blood sugar. What's more, many experienced it during typical daily activities such as working (42%), exercising (26%) and driving (19%), according to the survey, designed by the American College of Endocrinology (ACE) and supported by Merck. Recognizing symptoms like nervousness, sweating or shakiness before engaging in common activities is important to help reduce the risk of serious consequences, such as fainting or loss of consciousness.

"My experience with low blood sugar was unforgettable, and happened while driving home from teaching a class at a senior center," said Helen Rayon, patient with [type 2 diabetes](#). "I made it home, but fainted on my lawn and had to be taken to the emergency room. Since then, I've talked to my doctor about how to recognize symptoms of low blood sugar and learned that there are steps I can take to help reduce the chances of this happening again."

This survey of 2,530 adults diagnosed with type 2 diabetes assessed patients' personal experience with and knowledge about low blood sugar, and was conducted online in November and December 2010 by Harris Interactive.

Low blood sugar can be caused by skipping meals or irregular mealtimes, sudden increase in or excessive exercise, or certain diabetes medications. In this survey, a number of patients with type 2 diabetes were unable to identify the leading causes, including skipping meals, such as breakfast (27%), certain diabetes medications

(35%) and excessive exercise (46%). These results suggest there is a need for better education and understanding of the common causes, signs and symptoms of low blood sugar.

Learning to recognize the symptoms of low blood sugar and quickly treating them is important - symptoms may be mild at first but may worsen quickly if not treated. According to the survey, 6 percent of patients with type 2 diabetes have had to go to the emergency room at some point as a result of low blood sugar. The need for emergency care is just one of the potential consequences resulting from untreated low blood sugar. The survey also indicated that about one in five (21%) patients who have experienced it have needed assistance from others. It is important that patients and their friends, family and caregivers recognize and understand the symptoms of low blood sugar and what to do if it occurs.

To help bridge this knowledge gap, ACE recently launched the Blood Sugar Basics program, which aims to help people living with diabetes, their families and loved ones learn about the importance of understanding and managing low and high blood sugar. While the program is focused on type 2 diabetes, the most common type of diabetes, it also may be useful for people with other types of diabetes. The Blood Sugar Basics program is supported by Merck.

"Low blood sugar can be an alarming experience for people with type 2 diabetes, and failure to recognize and treat symptoms in a timely manner can cause serious complications," says Etie Moghissi, MD, FACP, FACE, AACE vice president and associate clinical professor of medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles. "Low blood sugar can be avoided, so it's important for patients to know what can cause blood sugar levels to drop

and talk with their doctor about how they can reduce the frequency of future episodes."

To help patients with type 2 diabetes learn more about symptoms and causes of low and high blood sugar, the Blood Sugar Basics website breaks down information on blood sugar into easy-to-understand interactive features, downloadable resources and fact pages to help people with [diabetes](#) learn more about managing blood sugar levels. For more information and updates on the [Blood Sugar Basics](#) program, visit www.BloodSugarBasics.com.

More information: Survey Design

This survey was conducted online by Harris Interactive between November 17 and December 14, 2010, among 2,530 adults diagnosed with type 2 diabetes mellitus in the United States. This included 1,308 nationally sampled respondents, as well as oversamples in the following metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs): Cleveland (n=261), Dallas (n=208), Detroit (n=222), Houston (n=211), St. Louis (n=200), San Diego (n=120). Results were weighted as needed for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income. Propensity score weighting also was used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online. A full methodology is available upon request. The survey was developed by the American College of Endocrinology (ACE) and supported by Merck.

Provided by GCI Health

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