



HEALTH AWARENESS

Hospitalization And Diabetes: Questionable Combination

(NAPSA)—For patients in the hospital, the difference between life and death isn't always last-minute surgery or a breakthrough medical technique. Sometimes it's as simple—or simply overlooked—as blood sugar levels.

When blood sugar levels become too high, even among people who do not have diabetes, there is an increased risk of infection and death. Many hospitalized and surgical patients risk or suffer complications each year because of changes in their blood sugar levels.

Currently, hospitals either create their own blood sugar monitoring and management standards or have no standards at all. At risk are people with undiagnosed diabetes as well as those who develop hyperglycemia because of the stress of their illness. For example, heart attack patients with high blood glucose are twice as likely to be alive one year later if they receive intensive blood sugar control while in the hospital.

An estimated 18.2 million Americans have diabetes—and one in three do not realize they have the disease. Meanwhile, 30 to 40 percent of cardiac surgery patients have diabetes.

Taking the initiative to address this growing health crisis, the American College of Endocrinology (ACE) and the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists (AACE) brought together the world's leading diabetes experts at a recent conference in Washington, D.C. At the conference, medical specialists reviewed research on blood sugar management and recommended steps for improving patient care, including careful monitoring of blood sugar levels in all hospital patients.



People with diabetes need to be diligent in monitoring their blood sugar in the hospital.

“The statistics are staggering,” commented Donald A. Bergman, MD, FACE, president of AACE. “Controlling blood sugar levels in hospitalized patients can make the difference between life and death. Controlling blood sugar also reduces complications, saves lives, shortens length of hospital stay and reduces costs.”

AACE provides the following advice for anyone entering the hospital:

- If you have diabetes, prior to hospitalization, review with your admitting physician their protocol for managing blood sugar levels;
- If you have diabetes and are hospitalized, request intensive therapy to manage your blood sugar;
- If you are hospitalized and do not have diabetes, ask a nurse whether your blood sugar has been checked; and
- If you develop high blood sugar while hospitalized, ask if intensive therapy is appropriate.

For more information, visit www.ace.com.