

Antidiabetic Tip Sheet for Frontline Nursing and CMT Staff

Risk Factors

These increase the potential for ADEs. Multiple factors increase risk.

- Insulin use
- Sliding scale insulin use
- Oral hypoglycemic medication use
- Oral steroid use
- Decrease in oral intake while taking antidiabetic medication
- Diabetic residents with concurrent illnesses
- Infection
- Diabetic residents with consistently high blood glucose levels
- Episodes of physical and/or emotional stress and trauma
- Diabetic residents that frequently decline antidiabetic medications or consume foods not included in diet

Signs & Symptoms

Any of these may indicate an ADE may have occurred.

- **Hypoglycemia**
 - Hypoglycemia (e.g., <50 mg/dl)
 - Falls
 - Headache
 - Shakiness, nervousness, anxiety
 - Sweating, chills, clamminess
 - Irritability, impatience
 - Change in mental status
 - Emotional changes (including new anger, sadness, stubbornness)
 - Lightheadedness, dizziness
 - Hunger
 - Nausea
 - Complaints of blurred or impaired vision
 - Tingling or numbness in lips and/or tongue
 - Weakness, fatigue or somnolence
 - Incoordination
 - Seizures
 - Unconsciousness
 - Rapid heartbeat

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Signs & Symptoms, continued

- **Ketoacidosis**

- Lab results indicating:
 - Profound dehydration
 - Elevated blood glucose
 - Ketones in urine
- Excessive thirst
- Frequent urination
- Nausea/vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Weakness/fatigue
- Shortness of breath
- Fruity-scented breath
- Confusion
- Rapid respirations
- Elevated temperature

Clinical Interventions

If any of these actions have occurred, the facility should conduct an investigation to determine if an ADE has occurred.

- STAT administration of Glucagon or IV dextrose
- Administration of orange juice or other high sugar food or fluids in response to blood sugar reading or symptoms
- STAT order for lab testing including to evaluate blood sugar and fluid and electrolyte status
- STAT order for insulin
- New order for administration of IV fluids
- Unplanned transfer to hospital

Quality Improvement

Access HQIN's [Antidiabetic Adverse Drug Events Self-Assessment](#) to assess your organization's commitment to preventing antidiabetic ADEs.

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