THE VALLEY HOSPITAL
Ridgewood, NJ

PATIENT CARE SERVICES (PCS) POLICY & PROCEDURE

SUBJECT: Hypoglycemia

This subject consists of 5 sections. The sections are:
SECTION 1: Adult Patient………………………………………………………...Page 1
SECTION 2: Pediatric Patient………………………………………………Page 2
SECTION 3: Patients with Insulin Pump……………………………………..Page 2
SECTION 4: Pregnant and Post-Partum Patients…………………………...Page 2
SECTION 5: Documentation……………………………………………………P...Page 2

SECTION 1: ADULT PATIENT

PURPOSE:
To provide guidelines for management of adult patients experiencing hypoglycemia (Blood Sugar below 70 mg/dl with or without symptoms)

SUPPORTIVE DATA:
Hypoglycemia remains the most common acute complication of patients with diabetes mellitus, especially among insulin dependent patients (primarily Type 1) and Type 2 patients receiving insulin and/or a sulfonylurea oral medication.

WHO CAN PERFORM: RN
PCA II, as delegated by RN

PROCEDURE:
1. Upon admission to nursing unit, assess the patient for signs and symptoms of hypoglycemia and remind patient with diabetes to call if symptoms of hypoglycemia are experienced. Patient MAY NOT experience symptoms but if so, examples of symptoms could include ANY of the following: Pallor, diaphoresis, irritability, tremors, confusion, headache or seizure.
2. If symptoms are experienced OR if routine Accu-Chek blood glucose is below 70 mg/dl treat with 15 grams carbohydrate. Examples include the following:
   - ½ cup (4 oz) of any fruit juice (avoid orange juice if renal patient)
   - 8 oz. skim milk
   - 6 oz. regular soda
3. Recheck blood glucose again in 15 minutes. If blood glucose remains below 70 mg/dl treat again and recheck blood glucose in 15 minutes. Continue to retest every 15 minutes and repeat treatment UNTIL blood glucose is above 70 mg/dl.
4. If meal or snack NOT scheduled for 30-60 minutes, follow treatment with a snack consisting of carbohydrate and protein such as:
   - crackers and peanut butter or cheese
   - ½ turkey sandwich
   - 1 cup milk and crackers
5. If blood glucose below 70 mg/dl and patient becomes unresponsive or is unable to swallow, call Rapid Response Team. Repeat in 15 minutes IF blood glucose remains below 70 mg/dl and patient remains unresponsive. Continue to recheck Accu-Chek and treat as described above.
6. If NO vascular access, patient unresponsive and unable to swallow and glucose below 70 mg/dl, call Rapid Response Team. Patient to be given supplemental carbohydrates as soon as he/she awakens and is able to swallow. (May take approximately 10 minutes for response following glucagon administration.)

7. Please notify Physician/Licensed Independent Practitioner (LIP) of all above.

SECTION 2: PEDIATRIC PATIENT (18 years of age or younger) Blood Glucose below 80 mg/dl

1. If patient able to swallow, administer 4 ounces fruit juice and recheck Accu-Chek blood glucose in 15 minutes. If blood glucose remains below 80 mg/dl, repeat intervention and continue until blood glucose above 80 mg/dl.

2. Notify endocrinologist/LIP for ALL blood glucose readings below 80 mg/dl.

3. If patient unresponsive or unable to swallow, MUST obtain order for IV 50% Dextrose. Call Rapid Response team for added support as needed.

SECTION 3: PATIENTS WITH INSULIN PUMP

Refer to PCS Policy #44.61, Insulin Pump and follow hypoglycemia directives.

SECTION 4: PREGNANT AND POST PARTUM PATIENTS

Refer to PCS Policy #70.93, Care of the Pregnant Woman with Pregestational and Gestational Diabetes, for blood glucose parameters, intervention and follow up assessment intervals.

SECTION 5: DOCUMENTATION

Critical Care Units – In Meditech
Medical Surgical Units – In Meditech,
Women’s and Children’s Services – In Centricity Perinatal and Meditech

RESPONSIBILITY:
It is the responsibility of nursing leadership or management member, as appropriate to implement, maintain, evaluate, review and revise this policy.

APPROVED DATE:
West 2 Practice Education Committee, August, 2011.
Jack Tohme, MD, July 21, 2011.
Adam Kelman, MD, July 20, 2011.
Women and Children’s Services, April 2, 2012.
Medical Surgical Services, April 4, 2012.
Heart and Vascular Institute, April 16, 2012.
Nurse Practice Council, July 10, 2015

Beverly S. Karas-Irwin, RN
Chairperson, Nurse Practice Education Council

Ann Marie Leichman, RN
Vice President, Patient Care Services
REFERENCES:
American Diabetes Association (2015). Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes. Diabetes Care, 38, 1,

Forsyth NURSE Scale© Level 1