



Medical Conditions: Recognizing, Responding and Communicating

DIABETES

Signs

- Fruity/acetone breath (high sugar)
- Drowsy/confused (high sugar)
- Disoriented (high and low sugar)
- Blurred vision (high and low sugar)
- Irritable/agitated (low sugar)
- Shaky/sweaty (low sugar)

Look for

- Bracelet or necklace
- Insulin injection equipment (needles, vials)
- Insulin pump under shirt, tubing

What to do

- Call paramedics ASAP
- If low, need sugar ASAP – allow if person has available

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY – PAST

Signs

- Headaches or seizures
- Paralyzed or weak in arms or legs
- Dizzy or clumsy
- Drooling
- Vision problems – nystagmus
- Increased sensitivity to light or touch
- Thinking problems (memory, disoriented, lack of attention)
- Behavior problems (agitated/aggressive, yelling, impulsive, crying or laughing w/o cause)

What to do

- Redirect behavior
- Return individual to familiar or safe environment
- Use normal tone of voice
- Use restraints as last resort



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STROKE

Signs

- SUDDEN worst headache
- SUDDEN visual change
- SUDDEN change in speech
- SUDDEN one-sided weakness/numbness
- SUDDEN loss of balance/coordination

How to check FAST

- Face** – look for facial droop or uneven smile
- Arms** – look for arm weakness or drift down when raised
- Speech** – slurred or garbled – ask them to repeat short phrase
- Time** – **call EMS** – transport ASAP to closest stroke-ready hospital

What is needed

- Time symptoms started or time LAST KNOWN NORMAL
- Name(s) and phone numbers of witness(es)
- NOTHING BY MOUTH AT ALL

APHASIA

Signs

- Acquired communication problem
- Trouble speaking or understanding
- Does NOT affect intelligence – may affect reading or writing

How to communicate

- Speak slowly
- Give time to speak or respond
- Reduce background noises
- Use other types of communication (drawing, gestures)
- Repeat back what they said

What to look for

- Sticker on vehicle or home front door
- Wallet card to identify person has aphasia