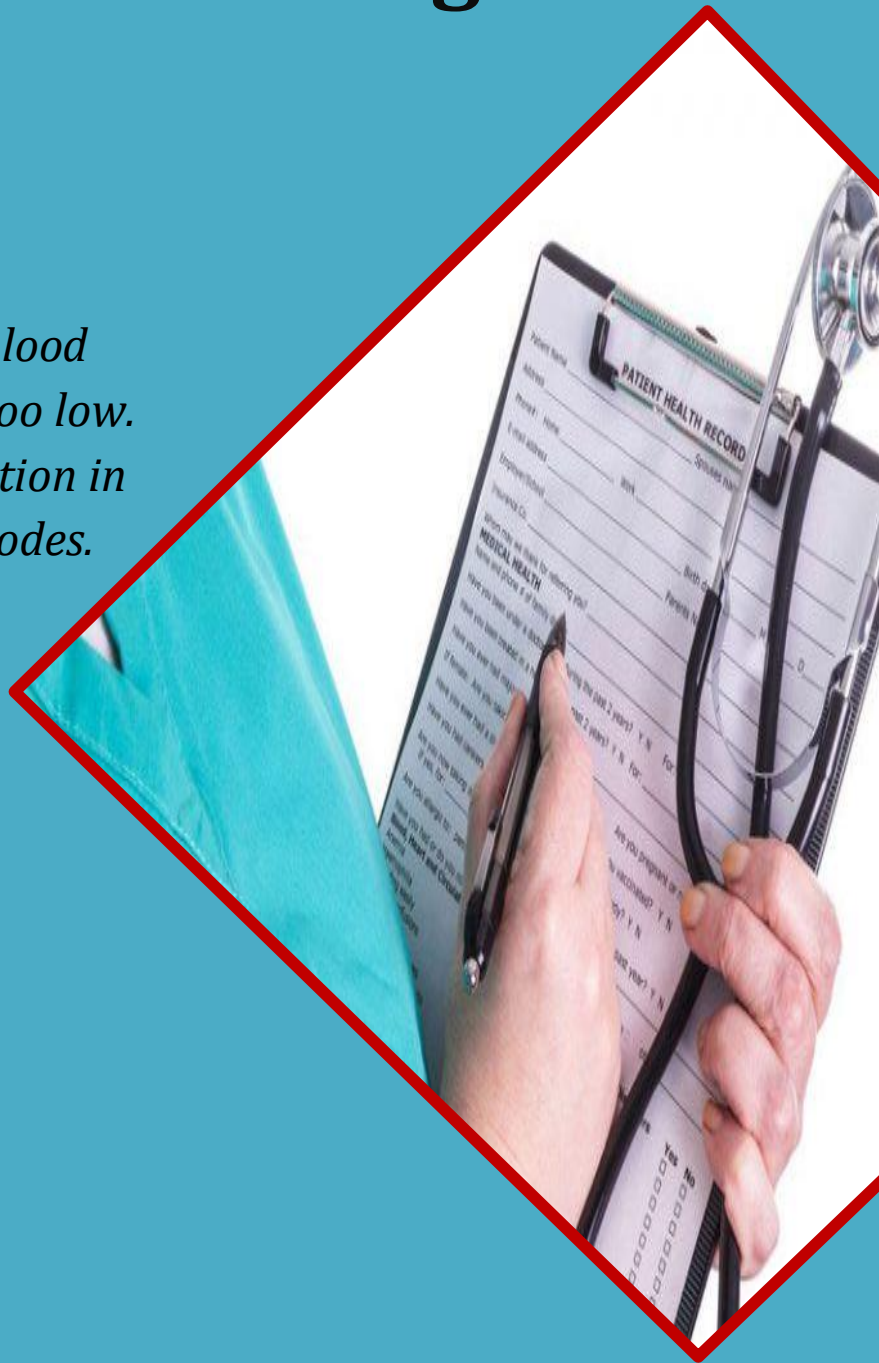




ICD-10 Codes for Documenting Hypoglycemia Caused by Low Blood Sugar

Hypoglycemia occurs when blood glucose (sugar) levels become too low. This article describes the condition in detail along with its ICD-10 codes.



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Blood glucose (blood sugar) levels in a person's body often vary up and down, throughout the day. Variation in blood sugar levels within a certain, normal range is quite common and may depend on a multitude of factors. On the other hand, if it goes below a healthy range, it is something dangerous and requires timely treatment. Hypoglycemia, (also called low blood glucose or low blood sugar) occurs when the level of glucose in the blood drops below normal. The body needs glucose to have enough energy. After consuming food, your blood absorbs glucose. When a person consumes more sugar than the body needs, the muscles and liver hoard the extra sugar. The condition arises when the body doesn't have enough sugar to use as fuel. Immediate treatment of this condition is essential when blood sugar levels are at 70 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL) or 3.9 millimoles per liter (mmol/L) or below. Treatment for this condition involves quick steps to get the blood sugar level back to a normal range – (either with high-sugar foods or drinks or through medications). If left untreated, this condition can lead to severe complications such as seizures, unconsciousness, and eventually, death. Endocrinologists or diabetologists treating this condition rely on reputable **medical billing companies** to meet their claim submission tasks and thus receive correct and timely reimbursement.

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) defines severe hypoglycemia as blood sugar less than 54 mg/dL. There are several causes why hypoglycemia can happen – the most common being the side effect of insulin or other types of drugs used to treat diabetes. If you happen to take insulin or diabetes medicines that increase the amount of insulin your body makes – but don't match your medications with your food or physical activity – you could develop hypoglycemia. Other common factors that directly contribute to this condition include not eating enough carbohydrates, skipping a daily meal, excessive alcohol consumption, hormone deficiencies and insulin over production.

Recognize the Symptoms of Low Blood Sugar Levels

Generally, symptoms of this condition tend to come on quickly and can vary from person to person. In some cases, people don't experience any specific symptoms at all. Common symptoms include – an irregular heart rhythm, fatigue, pale skin, tingling sensation around the mouth, sweating and shakiness, irritability and hunger.

As the condition worsens, signs and symptoms may include -

- Confusion, abnormal behavior or both, such as the inability to complete routine tasks
- Visual disturbances, such as blurred vision
- Seizures
- Poor coordination and concentration
- Numbness in the mouth and tongue
- Nightmares or bad dreams
- Loss of consciousness

How to Treat Hypoglycemia?

Diagnosis of this condition will generally begin with a detailed medical history, review of symptoms and further testing of blood sugar levels. If the result shows low blood sugar (under 70 mg/dL), it is important to begin the treatment. Treatment options for this condition aim to immediately raise the blood sugar level and identify the underlying conditions that cause the low blood sugar levels to prevent it from recurring.

Early symptoms can be easily treated by consuming 15 to 20 grams of fast-acting carbohydrate foods like - glucose tablets or gel, fruit juice, regular (not diet) soft drinks, and sugar candies. Recheck blood sugar levels after 15 minutes of initial intake of fast-acting carbohydrate foods. If blood sugar levels are still under 70 mg/dL (3.9 mmol/L), treat with another 15 to 20

grams of fast-acting carbohydrate, and recheck the blood sugar level again in 15 minutes. Repeat these steps until the blood sugar is above 70 mg/dL (3.9 mmol/L).

Once the blood sugar levels become normal, it's important to have a snack or meal to help stabilize the blood sugar. This also helps the body to refill glycogen that may have been depleted during hypoglycemia. On the other hand, if the symptoms become more severe, patients should take an injection of glucagon or intravenous glucose. However, do not give food or drinks to someone who becomes unconscious (due to low blood sugar), as he or she may aspirate these substances into the lungs. People with diabetes who are treated with insulin should always have a glucagon kit for low blood sugar emergencies.

Medicare Part B generally covers doctor visits and certain diabetes-related testing and services. Part B may cover blood glucose monitors to help treat hypoglycemia. However, you will typically need to pay your Part B deductible first, and a 20% coinsurance amount after your deductible is paid.

Endocrinology medical billing and coding is quite challenging. Endocrinologists and other specialists who provide specialized treatment for hypoglycemia need to document the diagnosis, screening and other treatment procedures performed using the correct medical codes. Medical billing and coding services offered by reputable companies can help physicians use the correct codes for their medical billing process.

ICD-10 Codes

- **E15 – Non-diabetic hypoglycemic coma**
- **E16 - Other disorders of pancreatic internal secretion**
 - ✓ E16.0 - Drug-induced hypoglycemia without coma
 - ✓ E16.1 - Other hypoglycemia

- ✓ E16.2 - Hypoglycemia, unspecified
- ✓ E16.3 - Increased secretion of glucagon
- ✓ E16.4 - Increased secretion of gastrin
- ✓ E16.8 - Other specified disorders of pancreatic internal secretion
- ✓ E16.9 - Disorder of pancreatic internal secretion, unspecified

For diabetic people, following a systematic diabetes management plan will help prevent the occurrence of hypoglycemia in the long run. A continuous glucose monitor (CGM) is one of the important prevention methods. In addition, consuming normal medications, changing your eating habits and adding new exercise patterns can bring visible changes in blood sugar levels. A fast-acting carbohydrate such as juice or glucose tablets can easily manage a falling blood sugar before it dips dangerously low. On the other hand, those non-diabetic patients who have continuous episodes of hypoglycemia can easily manage the same by consuming small meals throughout the day as this will help prevent blood sugar levels from getting too low.

Knowing the specific ICD-10 codes related to documenting low blood sugar levels is critical for providers. Partnering with a reliable and experienced **medical billing and coding outsourcing** company is important for physicians to ensure accurate and timely claim submissions.