



Practical Solutions to Prevent and Prepare for Severe Hypoglycemia

A Checklist for Alerts



The **ADA Standards of Care** calls for routine clinical screening to assess occurrence and risk of hypoglycemia at every visit. It also recommends that all patients with diabetes who have an increased risk of **level 2 or 3 hypoglycemia** have a prescription for emergency glucagon so that it is available if needed.

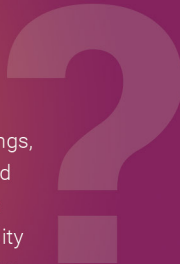
• Despite these recommendations, prescribing of glucagon is suboptimal. •



Less than **5% of patients who seek emergency care** for a hypoglycemic episode fill their glucagon prescription!

Are your at-risk patients with diabetes prepared for a hypoglycemic episode?

Patients with diabetes are seen in various clinical settings, presenting multiple opportunities for assessing risk and making sure that they are prepared for a hypoglycemic episode. Asking a patient about access to and availability of emergency glucagon at the following touchpoints can stress the importance:



When initiating insulin therapy



When intensifying an insulin regimen



When filling an insulin prescription at the pharmacy



When verifying that emergency glucagon is expired



After experiencing a severe hypoglycemic episode



After seeking emergency care for a severe hypoglycemic episode





Steps to

prevention and preparation



01

Review occurrence and risk of hypoglycemia at every visit



02

Prescribe emergency glucagon for at-risk patients



03

Encourage patients to fill their prescriptions



04

Teach patients to ensure that their caregivers can locate and use their glucagon



05

Check the expiration date of glucagon products

What is the best way to implement an alert?



Every electronic medical record system is different, so find an approach without creating significant burden on the care team.

Potential approaches include:



Automated pop-up reminders in the electronic medical record system



Shortcuts using auto text such as “smart” or “dot” phrases

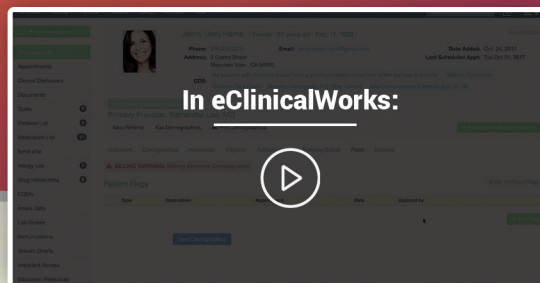
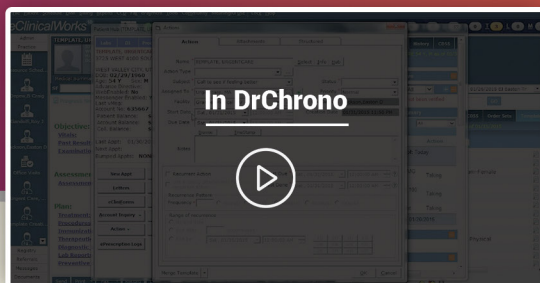


Dropdown boxes for completion



If you're not sure how to add a flag to your system, there might be training materials or other online resources to guide you.

Training Videos



Use of SmartTools in Epic®



DOWNLOAD



DOWNLOAD

Researchers developed and validated a 6-item risk stratification tool that categorizes the 12-month risk of hypoglycemia-related utilization in patients with type 2 diabetes. This tool could be programmed into an EMR system for automated risk stratification. (Karter AJ, et al. *JAMA Intern Med.* 2017;177(10):1461-1470)



Involve the entire care team to ensure that patients are prepared

Pharmacists can alert patients to the need for emergency glucagon when picking up

Pharmacist-led medication therapy management can include a discussion of emergency glucagon

Automated messaging can alert patients who have an elevated risk via a patient portal or other notification