



Monthly Hyperbaric Safety Meeting



Introduction

- Presenter: Karen Carson
- Role: Wound Nurse/HBO Technician
- Location: Fairview Wound Center and Hyperbaric Medicine
- Time in the field: 13 years

This month's topic: Diabetic Management for the Hyperbaric Patient



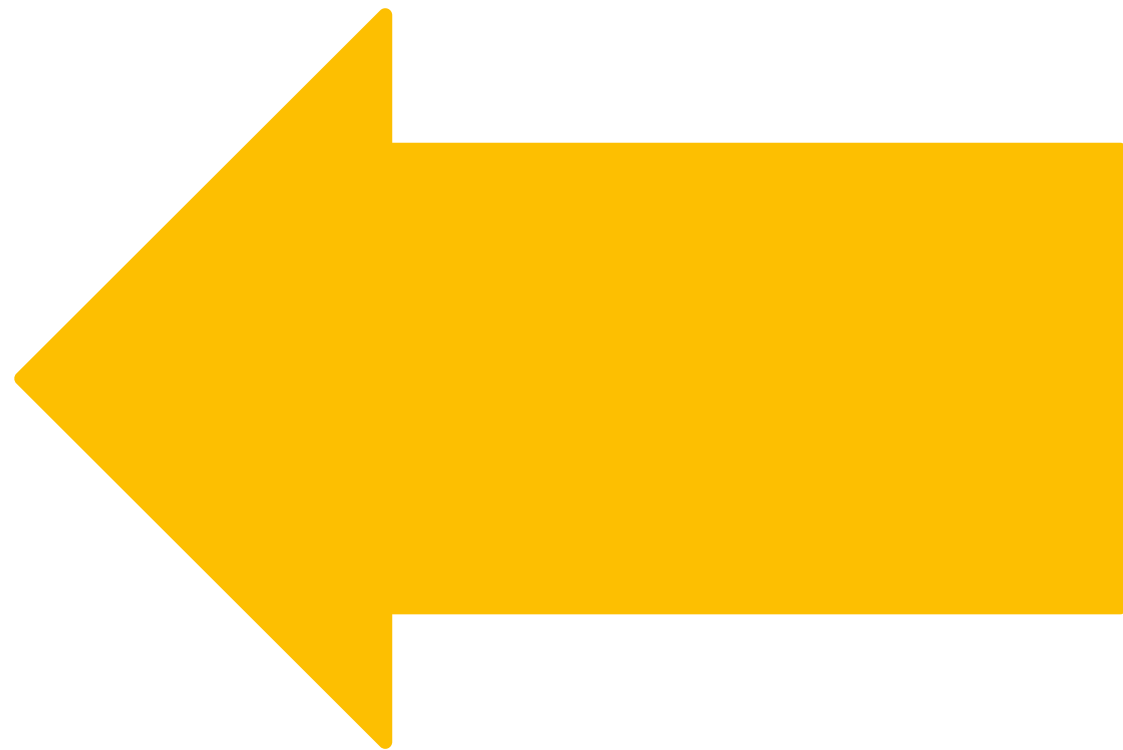
Overview:


Diabetic patients need to manage their blood glucose level. The level needs to be at least 110 mg/dL before they go into the hyperbaric chamber unless otherwise stated by the attending physician. The ideal pretreatment number is 120 mg/dL. It is also important to make sure blood glucose levels are not too high.






Maximum numbers vary but encourage the patient to try to keep blood glucose levels under 180/dl at all times unless otherwise suggested by the patient's healthcare professional. As a hyperbaric technician always ask diabetic patients if and what they ate prior to coming in. You should also ask if they took their medications. Both can significantly impact the patients' blood glucose levels and can help you to anticipate and prevent hypoglycemic events.





Hyperbaric can lower the patients' blood glucose significantly as a metabolic response, so it is important to make sure levels are high enough to prevent any drop in glucose from becoming a hypoglycemic medical emergency inside the chamber. Also account for the 2-hour treatment in which the patient will be without food.



Hypoglycemia Symptoms may include:

Diaphoresis
Fatigue
Lightheadedness
Shakiness
Nausea/vomiting
Confusion
Unresponsiveness
Anxiety
Seizures



Procedure:

1. Take patients blood glucose level upon arrival. If it is 110 mg/dl or higher, but still within normal range, continue with treatment, consider administration of glucose. If the glucose level is lower, administer glucose per facility policy. (critical low=follow hospital policy).
2. Follow your hospital protocol for hypoglycemia management. This could be the administration of Glucerna, fruit juice, glucose tablets, etc.
3. Recheck the patient's glucose 15 + minutes after administration. If it is lower than the initial level, the attending physician may refuse the patients treatment for the day for safety concerns of a hypoglycemic event. If the glucose has elevated above 100 (or the number your attending physician is comfortable with) continue with hyperbaric treatment. If the glucose has risen but not as high as it needs to be, with your physician approval, you may repeat glucose administration and/or another 15+ minute recheck if the schedule allows.

***ALWAYS FOLLOW
HOSPITAL PROTOCOLS
& ATTENDING
PROVIDERS ORDERS***

Insider Tip

While no choking hazards inside the chamber means that no food can go in, the patient's water bottle could be filled with juice, Glucerna, Juven, etc. Refrain from making this a regular occurrence due to the difficulty sanitizing those water bottles which could lead to mold.



Available on the member's portal, we have a flyer that can be handed out to patients that answers:

- What does my blood glucose reading need to be?
- Why does my blood glucose have to be a certain level before I can go in the hyperbaric chamber?
- How can I help to manage my blood glucose while receiving hyperbaric?

Managing Your Blood Glucose Levels During Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy

Help us to help you!

What does my blood glucose need to be?

Your blood glucose level needs to be at least 100 mg/dL before you go in the hyperbaric chamber, unless otherwise stated by your physician or hyperbaric technician. The ideal pre-treatment number is 120 mg/dL. It's also important to make sure your blood glucose isn't too high. Maximum numbers vary, but you should try to keep your blood glucose under 180 mg/dL at all times, again, unless otherwise suggested by your healthcare professional.

Why does my blood glucose have to be a certain level before I can go in the chamber?

Hyperbaric can lower your blood glucose significantly, so it's important to make sure your levels are high enough to prevent any drop in glucose from becoming a medical emergency inside the chamber. Also, the average treatment is approximately 2 hours, in which you will be without food. We will check your blood glucose again after treatment to ensure your level is not too low. If upon arrival at the hyperbaric center, your blood glucose is below an acceptable level, we may try to give you something to attempt to raise it.

How can I help to manage my blood glucose while receiving hyperbaric?

- If you're able, we may recommend you check your blood glucose at home before you come in for your treatment to ensure that your glucose level is not too low upon arrival.
- Eat before you come. Try to have a nutritious meal before coming in for treatment. Having a balanced meal with adequate protein, before treatment, can help to prevent your blood glucose from dropping in the chamber.
- Talk with your healthcare provider about your medication regimen if you are finding your blood glucose levels are often too low prior to treatment.



CONCLUSION: Serena Group's Policy

1. The HBO technician or provider will obtain a blood glucose level using the facility glucometer, before and after every hyperbaric treatment for diabetic patients.
 - A. Unless otherwise stated by the attending provider, pre-treatment minimum = 110 mg/dL and pre-treatment maximum will be determined by the attending provider on a case-by-case basis as it is medically indicated.
 - B. Unless otherwise stated by the attending provider, post-treatment minimum for discharge = >facility's definition of "low" and post-treatment maximum will be determined by the attending provider on a case-by-case basis as it is medically indicated.
2. If a blood glucose level needs to be increased before treatment or discharge, follow the facility's policy. If there is not an existing policy, administer the facility's preferred method of elevating blood glucose, such as fruit juice, Glucerna, glucose tablets, sandwich, crackers, etc. After administration, wait 15+ minutes and check the patient's blood glucose level again. This can be repeated one more time, but if the glucose level lowers, the patient should be discharged and not treated that day.
3. Patients should not be treated or discharged with a dangerously low or high blood glucose level. Admittance or transfer to the Emergency Department may be necessary.
4. Educate patients on diabetic management and nutrition regularly to lower the risk of in chamber hypoglycemia and improve healing.

Any Questions



Quiz



Question 1

1. Name 5 symptoms of hypoglycemia.

Answer 1

Diaphoresis

Fatigue

Lightheadedness

Shakiness

Nausea/vomiting

Confusion

Unresponsiveness

Anxiety

Seizures

Question 2

A diabetic patient is on treatment 15 and has never had issues with confinement anxiety but is now 1 hour into treatment and presenting with anxiety symptoms. His blood glucose was 125mg/dl upon arrival. What should be your first 3 steps?

Answer 2

1. Communicate: Talk to the patient. See what's going on.
2. Abort treatment. Notify physician.
3. Check blood glucose and all vitals upon exiting the chamber.

Question 3

What is your facility's protocol for hypoglycemia management and prevention?

Answer 3

Every facility is likely to be unique. Let's hear yours!

Round Table



- Member's Portal
 - <https://old.serenagroups.com/portal/hyperbaric-oxygen-therapy/>
 - SerenaGroups.com
 - Password: WoundCare
- Sudden Idiopathic Sensorineural Hearing Loss – Medicare Advantage Plans



Medicare Advantage & HBOT for Sudden Idiopathic Sensorineural Hearing Loss (SSNHL)

- CMS (original Medicare) does not list SSNHL as a covered indication for HBOT.
- Medicare Advantage (MA) Plans MUST cover what Medicare covers as a minimum, BUT they can choose to cover beyond CMS. And MA plans can list their own elements of medical necessity.
- Coverage varies by plan. Always verify plan policy and obtain prior authorization.

Attendance: October



In Attendance:

- Chambersburg
- Jackson
- MGMC
- Inspira
- Monroeville
- ACMH
- Akron

Absent:

- Henry Ford
- Fairview



NEXT MONTH

Topic:

Compliance Checklist & Survey Prep

Tuesday, December 2, 2025

12:15pm est



Contact Us

QUESTIONS/PROBLEMS

Ally George & Dr. Thomas Serena



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MEMBER'S PORTAL

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THANK YOU !!!

