

Case Study 2: Patient G.C.

You admit G.C., 48 yr. old obese Hispanic male with Type 2 Diabetes on your medical floor with left heel ulceration. He completed antibiotics and Prednisone for a severe respiratory infection 1 week ago. He is a soft-spoken unemployed cook. He conveys that he lives with Mama (she is present speaks no English). He is unmarried and has no children. He appears depressed. You scan his Labs:

Blood glucose 275
BUN 32 – Creatinine 2.5
Triglycerides, Total Cholesterol 270

He states he was started on 25 units of NPH Insulin when he developed the foot ulcer several weeks ago. He states his PCP said if he does not “straighten out he may end up on dialysis.” You ask him if he maintains a dietary plan and he says; “sometimes.” GC states his doctor told him to try to maintain a blood glucose level of 100-150.

The next day GC received his AM dose of insulin at 0645. Blood glucose check at 11:30 is 138. You note GC ate poorly at breakfast and very little at lunch because he wanted to rest. At 1430 you want to check on GC and are prepared to change the dressing on his foot. When you enter the room, he says he has a headache. You immediately check his blood sugar which is 69.

- What is your immediate plan of direction? Give GC some juice or soda and recheck his BG level in 15 mins.
- Why did the hypoglycemia occur at 4 PM? When the insulin peaked, GC had not eaten very well and it made his sugar drop.
- What nursing diagnoses are appropriate? Use the 15 in 15 rule. Once his BS is back to normal give GC a meal or something that has carbs, proteins, and fats.
- Why does the doctor recommend that GC maintain a higher than normal level? GC could have hypoglycemia unawareness. You want to raise the BS so that the body will reset and get the awareness back.
- What could cause GC's blood sugar to elevate? Having candy, juice, or soda
- What barriers does GC have? Culture and Language
- What are important goals for GC regarding diabetes care? Maintain his BG levels, following his diet, doing foot care every day
- What culture or language challenges might GC have? As far as Mexican culture goes, his diet will be a challenge. With his wife speaking Spanish only, she doesn't understand what the doctor is telling her husband so it will be hard for her to help him with his diabetes and help him manage it.