



What is Diabetic Ketoacidosis?

Diabetic Ketoacidosis (DKA) is a medical condition that arises when the body produces too much acid in the blood caused by an extreme shortage of insulin. It can be a complication of diabetes and, if left untreated, can be life-threatening. Knowing the causes, recognizing symptoms, and understanding the treatment is critical to catching and managing this serious condition.

Causes

Diabetic ketoacidosis is a severe complication of diabetes when there is an extreme shortage of insulin, or the body is not responding correctly to insulin. Without insulin, the body cannot use glucose from carbohydrates to fuel the cells. The body starts to break down fat for energy, releasing fatty acids into the bloodstream, resulting in a build-up of ketones. The accumulation of ketones causes the pH of the blood to become too acidic, resulting in a state known as ketoacidosis.

Symptoms

The symptoms of diabetic ketoacidosis often vary depending on the severity but commonly include thirst, rapid breathing, nausea, abdominal pain, confusion, exhaustion, and high blood sugar levels. Other signs include fruity-smelling breath, dry skin, and frequent urination.

Treatment

Once diagnosed, diabetic ketoacidosis needs to be treated immediately as it can become life-threatening. The main aim of the treatment is to restore the body's pH to normal levels. This is usually achieved with intravenous fluids and insulin. The fluids help reduce the dehydration caused by frequent urination, and the insulin helps control the blood glucose (sugar) level. In some cases, potassium may also be added to the treatment to replace lost electrolytes.

Conclusion

It is crucial to treat diabetic ketoacidosis as soon as possible to prevent any long-term complications or death. Although it can be life-threatening, it can be managed with prompt medical attention. It is essential always to be familiar with the symptoms to catch and manage them as early as possible.

For Additional Information about Diabetes, Visit:

<https://diabetes.org>

<https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/search/search-results?q=diabetes>

*This flyer is informational and not considered to be medical advice. Please consult your healthcare provider for information related specifically to your condition.