

Hyperglycemic Emergency Management (DKA/EDKA/HHS¹) 2-Bag Method - Adult

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PRESENTATION

WORKUP/ASSESSMENT

DIAGNOSIS

TREATMENT

Patient presenting with polyuria, polydipsia, nausea/vomiting, or abdominal pain with or without history of diabetes mellitus

- History and physical including use of insulin pump² and/or continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) device³
- Basic metabolic panel with total calcium, phosphorous, magnesium, c-peptide, venous or arterial blood gas, lactate, beta-hydroxybutyrate (BHB), and osmolality
 - Notify provider if bicarbonate < 15 mEq/L
- Point of care (POC) fingerstick glucose
- Consider hemoglobin A1c, hepatic panel, lipase, triglycerides, urine HCG if clinically indicated
- Diagnostic imaging, as clinically indicated
- Strict input and output hourly
 - Notify provider if urine output < 0.5 mL/kg/hour

- Assess⁴ the following:
 - Hydration status
 - Electrolyte status
 - Blood glucose
 - Acidosis
 - Anion gap

Does the patient have DKA, EDKA, DKA with HHS, or HHS only⁵?

Yes

No

- Admit to ICU
- NPO status
- Discontinue all previous insulin⁶ and oral diabetes medications including insulin pump disconnection if applicable
- CGM device results should not be used for clinical decision making
- Initiate DKA/EDKA/HHS order set
- Consult Endocrinology-General Service
- Consult Diabetes Educator
- POC fingerstick glucose every hour
- Neuro checks every 4 hours
- Basic metabolic panel with total calcium every 4 hours for 24 hours then every 8 hours as indicated
- Phosphorus and magnesium every 8 hours as indicated
- If DKA, EDKA, **or** DKA with HHS⁵
 - BHB **and** venous or arterial blood gas every 8 hours as indicated
 - See [Page 2](#) for DKA, EDKA, **or** DKA with HHS⁵
- If HHS Only:
 - Osmolality every 4 hours for 24 hours
 - See [Page 4](#) for HHS Only

- Continue work up for further treatment or alternative diagnosis
 - Infection
 - Insulin omission (including new onset type 1 diabetes)
 - Ischemia (cardiac, central nervous system, gastrointestinal)
 - Intra-abdominal (biliary/pancreatitis)
 - Iatrogenic (antipsychotics, steroids, checkpoint inhibitors, SGLT-2 inhibitors)
 - Indiscretion (diet, non-adherence)
- Refer to [Inpatient Hyperglycemia-Adult algorithm](#) as indicated

NPO = nothing by mouth

SGLT = sodium-glucose cotransporter

¹ Diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA), euglycemic diabetic ketoacidosis (EDKA), and hyperosmolar hyperglycemic state (HHS)

² Refer to Managing Patients with Insulin Pumps (ATT3663)

³ Refer to Guidelines for Patients with a Continuous Glucose Monitor (CGM) (#ATT3587)

⁴ Continue to look for the underlying cause of events

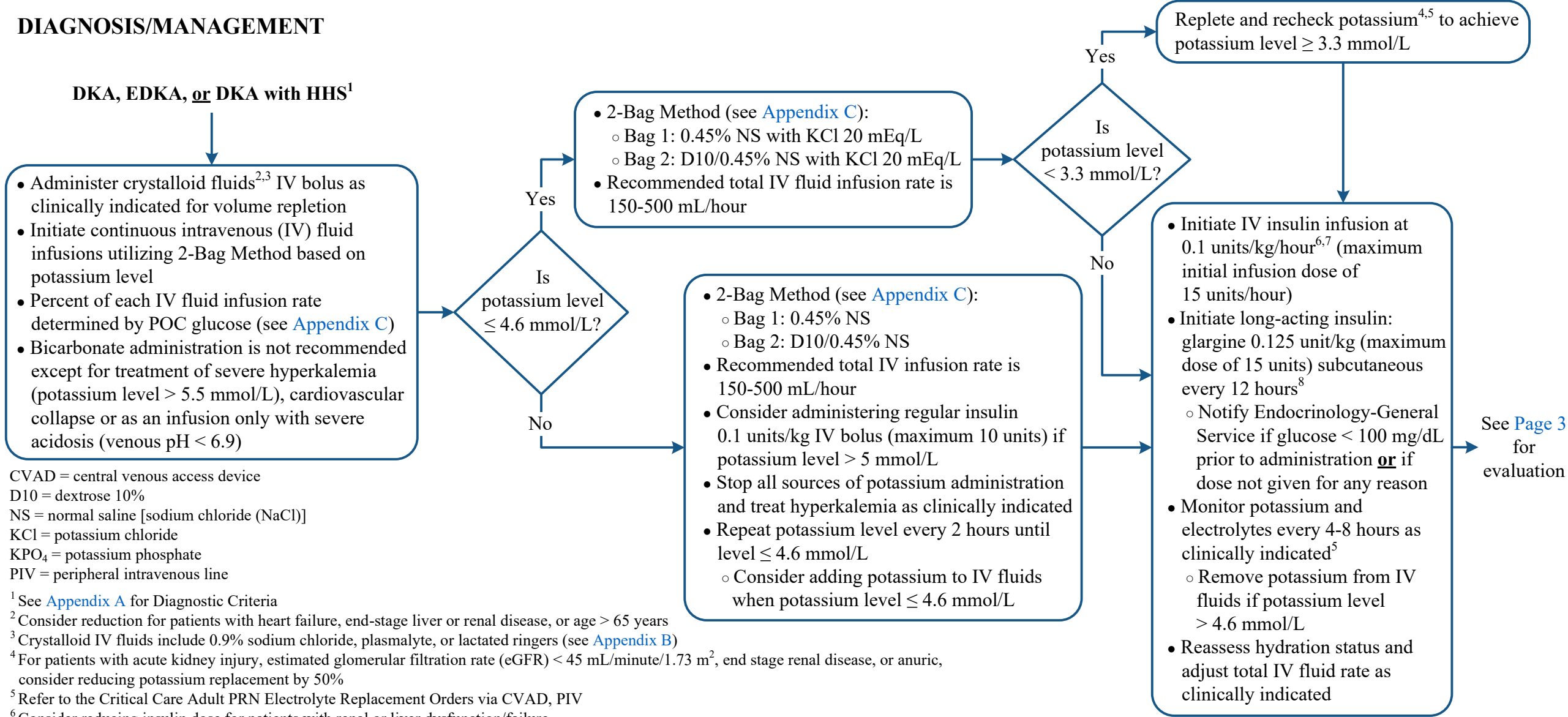
⁵ See [Appendix A](#) for Diagnostic Criteria

⁶ Long acting insulin should be evaluated and ordered as indicated

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DIAGNOSIS/MANAGEMENT



CVAD = central venous access device
D10 = dextrose 10%
NS = normal saline [sodium chloride (NaCl)]
KCl = potassium chloride
KPO₄ = potassium phosphate
PIV = peripheral intravenous line

¹ See [Appendix A](#) for Diagnostic Criteria

² Consider reduction for patients with heart failure, end-stage liver or renal disease, or age > 65 years

³ Crystalloid IV fluids include 0.9% sodium chloride, plasmalyte, or lactated ringers (see [Appendix B](#))

⁴ For patients with acute kidney injury, estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR) < 45 mL/minute/1.73 m², end stage renal disease, or anuric, consider reducing potassium replacement by 50%

⁵ Refer to the Critical Care Adult PRN Electrolyte Replacement Orders via CVAD, PIV

⁶ Consider reducing insulin dose for patients with renal or liver dysfunction/failure

⁷ Round infusion dose to nearest 0.1 units/hour

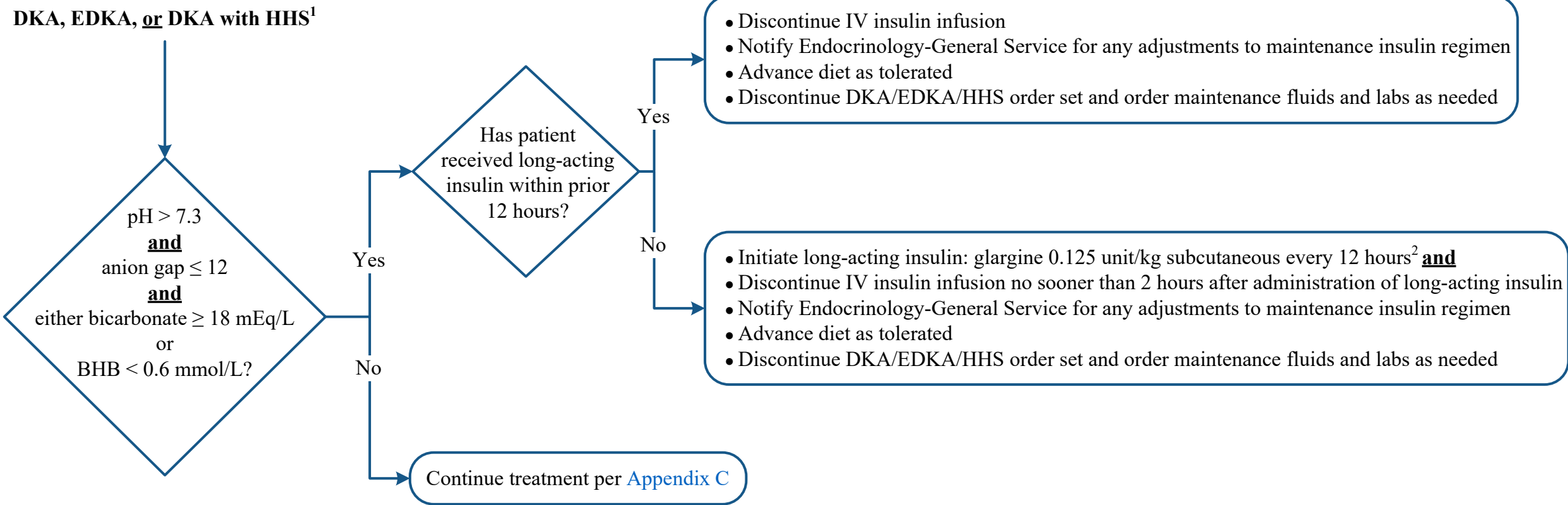
⁸ If eGFR < 45 mL/minute/1.73 m² **or** age > 70 years, reduce glargine dose to 0.1 units/kg subcutaneous every 12 hours

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EVALUATION FOR RESOLUTION

FOLLOW UP TREATMENT



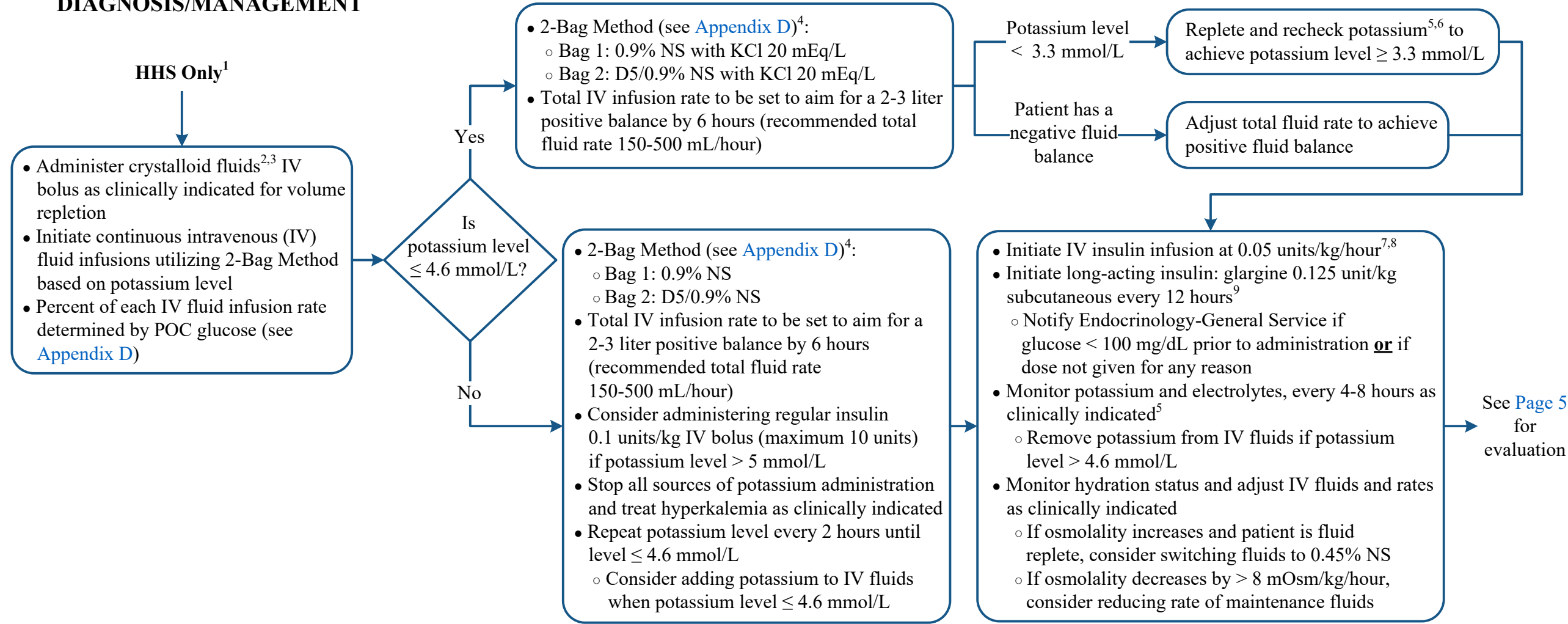
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DIAGNOSIS/MANAGEMENT



¹ See [Appendix A](#) for Diagnostic Criteria

² Consider reduction for patients with heart failure, end-stage liver or renal disease, or age > 65 years

³ Crystalloid IV fluids include 0.9% sodium chloride, plasmalyte, or lactated ringers (see [Appendix B](#))

⁴ For patients with corrected sodium > 147 mmol/L, consider use of 0.45% NS and D5/0.45% NS as base fluids

⁵ For patients with acute kidney injury, eGFR < 45 mL/minute/1.73 m², end stage renal disease, or anuric, consider reducing potassium replacement by 50%

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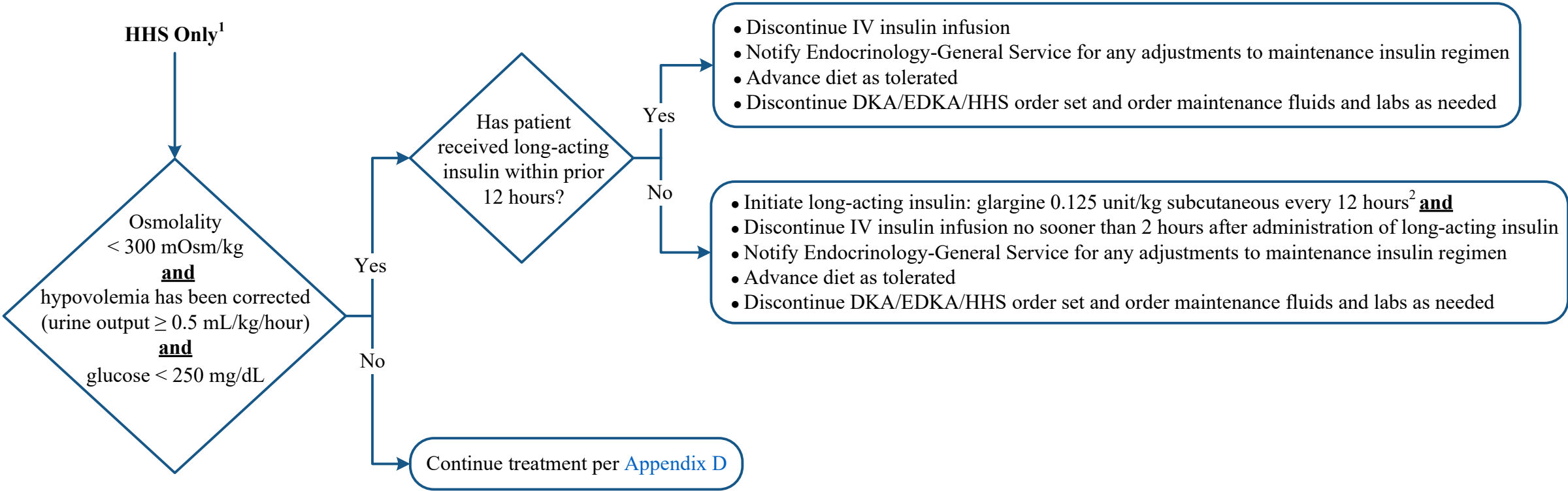
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APPENDIX A: Diagnostic Criteria

	Blood Glucose	pH ¹	Bicarbonate	BHB	Osmolality
DKA	> 250 mg/dL	< 7.3	< 15 mEq/L	> 3 mmol/L	< 320 mosm/kg
EDKA	≤ 250 mg/dL	< 7.3	< 15 mEq/L	> 3 mmol/L	< 320 mosm/kg
DKA with HHS ²	> 600 mg/dL	< 7.3	< 15 mEq/L	> 3 mmol/L	≥ 320 mosm/kg
HHS ² Only	> 600 mg/dL	≥ 7.3	≥ 15 mEq/L	≤ 3 mmol/L	≥ 320 mosm/kg

¹ Arterial or venous
² With marked hypovolemia

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APPENDIX B: Crystalloid And Dextrose Containing Fluids

Fluids	Sodium (mEq/L)	Chloride (mEq/L)	Potassium (mEq/L)	Magnesium (mEq/L)	Dextrose (grams/L)	Buffer (mEq/L)	Osmolarity (mOsm/L)	Comments
Plasma	140	103	4	2	N/A	Bicarbonate (25)	275-290	
0.9% sodium chloride	154	154	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	308	Not preferred in patients with/or at risk for hyperchloremia and/or acute kidney injury
Plasma-Lyte A	140	98	5	3	N/A	Acetate (27)	294	Preferred for patients with low sodium bicarbonate and hyperchloremia. Monitor electrolytes, especially potassium and magnesium
Lactated Ringers	130	109	4	N/A	N/A	Lactate (28)	273	Contains calcium 3 mEq/L
D10/0.45% sodium chloride	77	77	N/A	N/A	100	N/A	660	Use in DKA, EDKA, or DKA with HHS
D10/0.45% with potassium chloride (KCl) 20 mEq ¹	77	77	20	N/A	100	N/A	694	
D5/0.9% sodium chloride	154	154	N/A	N/A	50	N/A	560	Use in HHS Only
D5/0.9% with potassium chloride (KCl) 20 mEq ¹	154	154	20	N/A	50	N/A	600	
D5/0.45% sodium chloride	77	77	N/A	N/A	50	N/A	406	Use in HHS Only if corrected sodium > 147 mmol/L or in DKA, EDKA, and DKA with HHS only if D10 is unavailable
D5/0.45% with potassium chloride (KCl) 20 mEq ¹	77	77	20	N/A	50	N/A	447	

¹ Consider potassium containing fluid if potassium level ≤ 4.6 mmol/L; adjust potassium content as clinically indicated for renal dysfunction

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APPENDIX C: DKA, EDKA, or DKA with HHS Blood Glucose Monitoring and Management Using 2-Bag Method

POC Glucose Level	IV Fluid Titration ¹		IV Insulin Infusion Management ³	Recheck POC Glucose
	Bag 1 (0.45% NS with or without KCl ²)	Bag 2 (D10/0.45%NS with or without KCl ²)		
In first hour			If glucose does not decrease by at least 75 mg/dL and POC glucose greater than 250 mg/dL, increase IV insulin infusion to 0.15 unit/kg/hour	1 hour
> 250 mg/dL	100% hourly IV fluid rate	0% hourly IV fluid rate	Notify ICU Team if glucose decreases by more than 100 mg/dL/hour for consideration to decrease IV insulin infusion dose by 50% ³	
200-250 mg/dL	50% hourly IV fluid rate	50% hourly IV fluid rate		
150-199 mg/dL	30% hourly IV fluid rate	70% hourly IV fluid rate		
100-149 mg/dL	10% hourly IV fluid rate	90% hourly IV fluid rate		
70-99 mg/dL	0% hourly IV fluid rate	100% hourly IV fluid rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• STOP IV INSULIN INFUSION• Give D₅₀W 12.5 grams IV push, and notify Endocrinology-General Service and ICU Team• Recheck POC glucose every 15 minutes until ≥ 100 mg/dL<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ If POC ≥ 100 mg/dL resume IV insulin infusion at 50% of previous IV insulin infusion dose³◦ If POC < 100 mg/dL for 2 consecutive checks, notify Endocrinology-General Service and ICU Team for further adjustments³	15 minutes
< 70 mg/dL	0% hourly IV fluid rate	100% hourly IV fluid rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• STOP IV INSULIN INFUSION• Give D₅₀W 25 grams IV push, and notify Endocrinology-General Service and ICU Team• Recheck POC glucose every 15 minutes until ≥ 100 mg/dL<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ If POC ≥ 100 mg/dL resume IV insulin infusion at 50% of previous IV insulin infusion dose³◦ If POC < 100 mg/dL for 2 consecutive checks, notify Endocrinology-General Service and ICU Team for further adjustments³	
If pH > 7.3 and anion gap ≤ 12 and either bicarbonate ≥ 18 mEq/L or BHB < 0.6 mmol/L (resolution of DKA, EKDA, or DKA with HHS), notify ICU Team to initiate long acting insulin if indicated, discontinue order set, order maintenance fluids and labs as needed, and advance diet. Notify Endocrinology-General Service for any adjustments to maintenance insulin regimen.				

¹ Titrate both IV fluids for a combined rate of 100%

² If potassium level ≤ 4.6 mmol/L: Add to BOTH bag 1 and 2: potassium chloride (KCl) 20 mEq/L; If potassium level > 4.6 mmol/L: Do NOT add potassium to bag 1 or 2

³ IV insulin infusion dose reduction should only be made twice. Minimal IV insulin infusion dose for DKA, EDKA, or DKA with HHS is 0.025 units/kg/hour.

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APPENDIX D: HHS Only Blood Glucose Monitoring and Management Using 2-Bag Method

POC Glucose Level	IV Fluid Titration ¹		IV Insulin Infusion Management ⁴	Recheck POC Glucose
	Bag 1 (0.9% NS with or without KCl ^{2,3})	Bag 2 (D5/0.9%NS with or without KCl ^{2,3})		
In first hour			If glucose does not decrease by at least 75 mg/dL and POC glucose greater than 250 mg/dL, increase IV insulin infusion to 0.1 unit/kg/hour	1 hour
> 250 mg/dL	100% hourly IV fluid rate	0% hourly IV fluid rate	Notify ICU Team if glucose decreases by more than 100 mg/dL/hour for consideration to decrease IV insulin infusion dose by 50% ⁴	1 hour
200-250 mg/dL	50% hourly IV fluid rate	50% hourly IV fluid rate		
150-199 mg/dL	30% hourly IV fluid rate	70% hourly IV fluid rate		
100-149 mg/dL	10% hourly IV fluid rate	90% hourly IV fluid rate		
70-99 mg/dL	0% hourly IV fluid rate	100% hourly IV fluid rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• STOP IV INSULIN INFUSION• Give D₅₀W 25 mL IV push, and notify Endocrinology-General Service and ICU Team• Recheck POC glucose every 15 minutes until ≥ 100 mg/dL<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ If POC ≥ 100 mg/dL resume insulin infusion at 50% of previous IV insulin infusion dose⁴◦ If POC < 100 mg/dL for 2 consecutive checks, notify Endocrinology-General Service and ICU Team for further adjustments⁴	15 minutes
< 70 mg/dL	0% hourly IV fluid rate	100% hourly IV fluid rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• STOP IV INSULIN INFUSION• Give D₅₀W 50 mL IV push, and notify Endocrinology-General Service and ICU Team• Recheck POC glucose every 15 minutes until ≥ 100 mg/dL<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ If POC ≥ 100 mg/dL resume insulin infusion at 50% of previous IV insulin infusion dose⁴◦ If POC < 100 mg/dL for 2 consecutive checks, notify Endocrinology-General Service and ICU Team for further adjustments⁴	
If osmolality < 300 mOsm/kg and hypovolemia has been corrected (urine output ≥ 0.5 mL/kg/hour) and glucose < 250 mg/dL (resolution of HHS Only), notify ICU Team to initiate long acting insulin if indicated, discontinue order set, order maintenance fluids and labs as needed, and advance diet. Notify Endocrinology-General Service for any adjustments to maintenance insulin regimen.				

¹ Titrate both fluids for a combined rate of 100%
² If potassium level ≤ 4.6 mmol/L: Add to BOTH bag 1 and 2: potassium chloride (KCl) 20 mEq/L;
If potassium level > 4.6 mmol/L: Do NOT add potassium to bag 1 or 2

³ For patients with corrected sodium > 147 mmol/L, consider use of 0.45% NS and D5/0.45% NS as base fluids
⁴ Insulin infusion dose reduction should only be made one time. Minimal insulin infusion dose for HHS Only is 0.025 units/hour.

Department of Clinical Effectiveness V6
Approved by the Executive Committee of the Medical Staff on 08/20/2024

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- MD Anderson Institutional Policy Attachment #ATT3663 – Managing Patients with Insulin Pumps
- MD Anderson Institutional Policy Attachment #ATT3587 – Guidelines for Patients with a Continuous Glucose Monitor (CGM)
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DEVELOPMENT CREDITS

This practice consensus statement is based on majority opinion of the Hyperglycemic Emergency Management workgroup at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center for the patient population. These experts included:

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