

Cardiac Rehab: Blood Glucose Not Checked, Nurse Not Liable For Patient’s Accident Driving Home.

The patient had been an insulin-dependent diabetic for at least fifteen years before she started an outpatient cardiac rehab program at the hospital following open heart surgery.

The rehab program consisted of cardiovascular exercise routines performed under the supervision of a nurse with a specialized background in cardiac rehab.

The nurse usually checked this patient’s and the other diabetic patients’ blood glucoses at the end of each exercise session before letting them leave.

No Indication of a Problem With Blood Sugar

One day, however, the nurse did not check the diabetic patients’ blood glucoses because she had to focus on another patient who said she was not feeling well. The patient in question had a hypoglycemic episode on the way home and was injured in a one-car motor vehicle accident.

The jury in the Superior Court, Norfolk County, Massachusetts ruled the nurse was not liable. There was no reason that day for the nurse to suspect a problem with the injured patient’s blood glucose. **Russell v. LaFond, 2009 WL 5498604 (Sup. Ct. Norfolk Co., Massachusetts, May 22, 2009).**