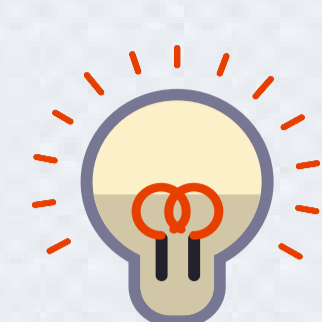


# Hypoglycemia Prevention

## Fast Facts About Hypoglycemia

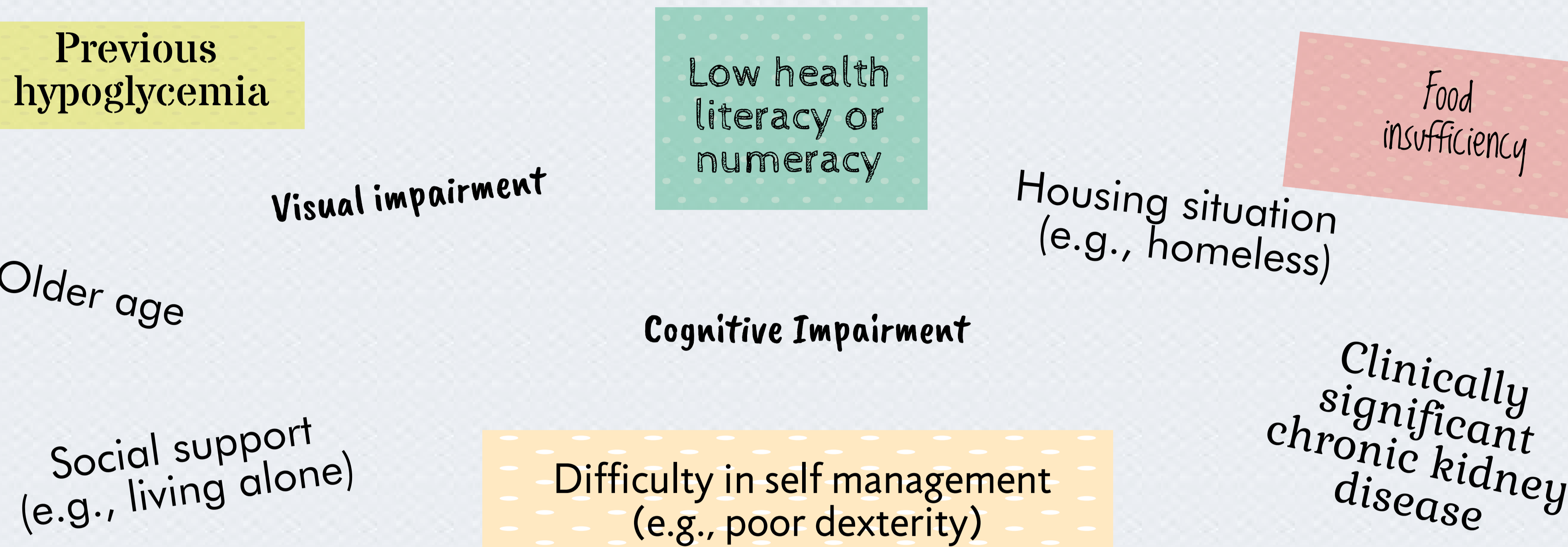
- Insulin is the second most common drug associated with emergency department visits for adverse drug effects.(1)
- Hospital admissions for hypoglycemia among Medicare beneficiaries increased by 22% from 1999-2010, in contrast to a 40% decrease in the rate of hyperglycemia admissions. (2)
- Severe hypoglycemia may result in serious consequences like coma, seizures, and even death.(3)
- Evidence is accumulating that even mild hypoglycemic events have consequences, including lower health related quality of life, higher mortality, increased risk for cardiovascular disease, serious fractures related to falls, and automobile crashes.(4,5,6)



Good news! Hypoglycemia can be prevented. Use shared decision making to individualize A1C goals for patient safety.



## What are some of the risk factors?



## Why is it Important to Individualize Glycemic Goals?

- Tight control of blood glucose may increase the incidence of hypoglycemia. Additionally, not all patients recognize and report symptoms.
- Risk factors for hypoglycemia should be taken into consideration to prevent adverse drug events and longer term consequences of hypoglycemia.

## Individualizing A1C Goals

Scientific evidence supports individualizing glycemic goals based on life expectancy, existing chronic comorbid conditions, and patient preferences. This is the basis for the American Diabetes Association (ADA) Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes and the ADA/American Geriatrics Society guidelines, as well as the Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense (VA/DOD) guidelines.(7)

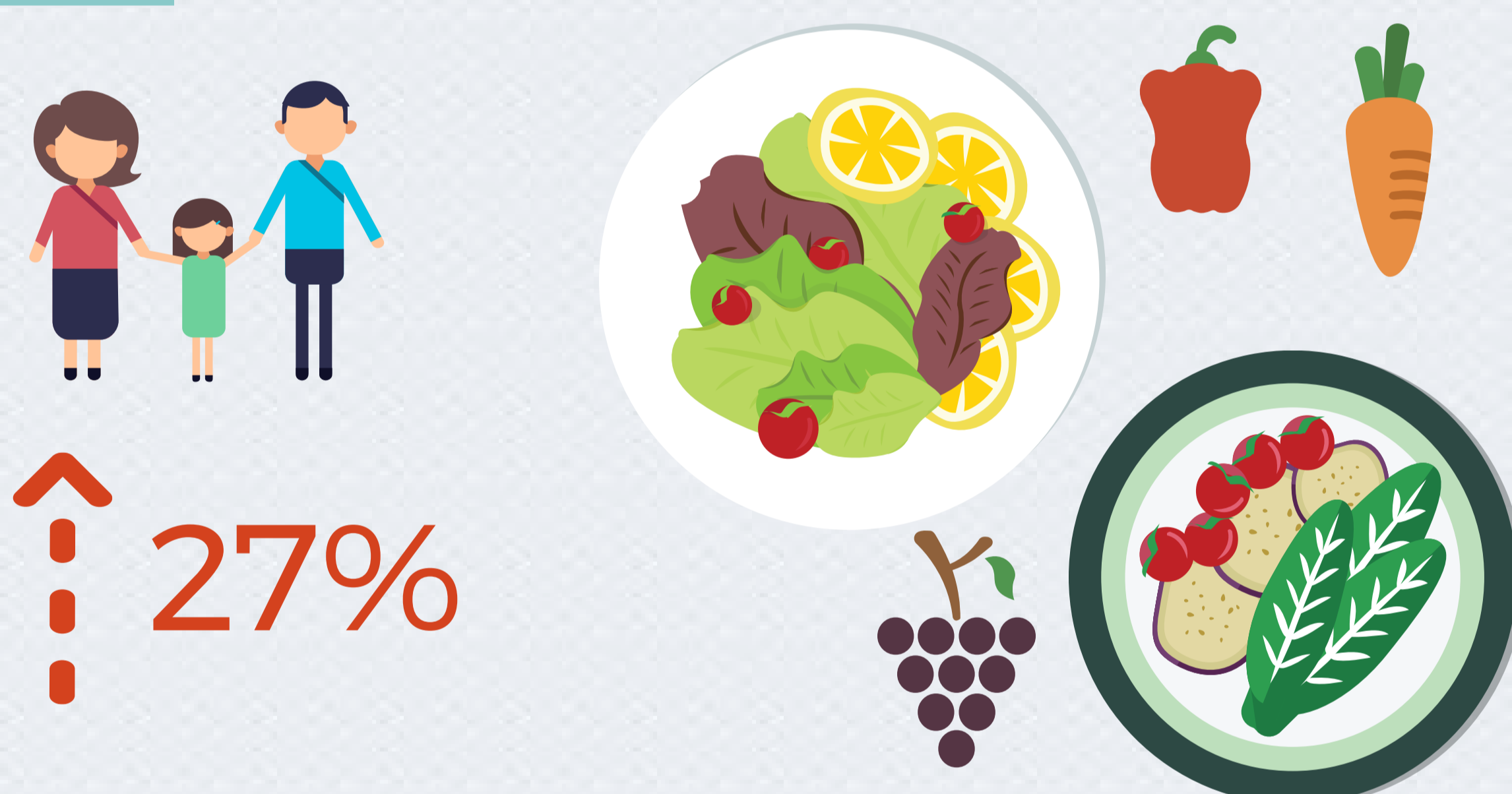
- 7.0-7.5 in healthy adults with long life expectancy
- 7.5-8.0 in those with moderate co-morbidity and a life expectancy <10 years
- 8.0-9.0 in those with multiple morbidities and shorter life expectancy

## What else should you consider about your patients?

### Food Insecurity

1 in 7 U.S. households do not have adequate access to food.(8)

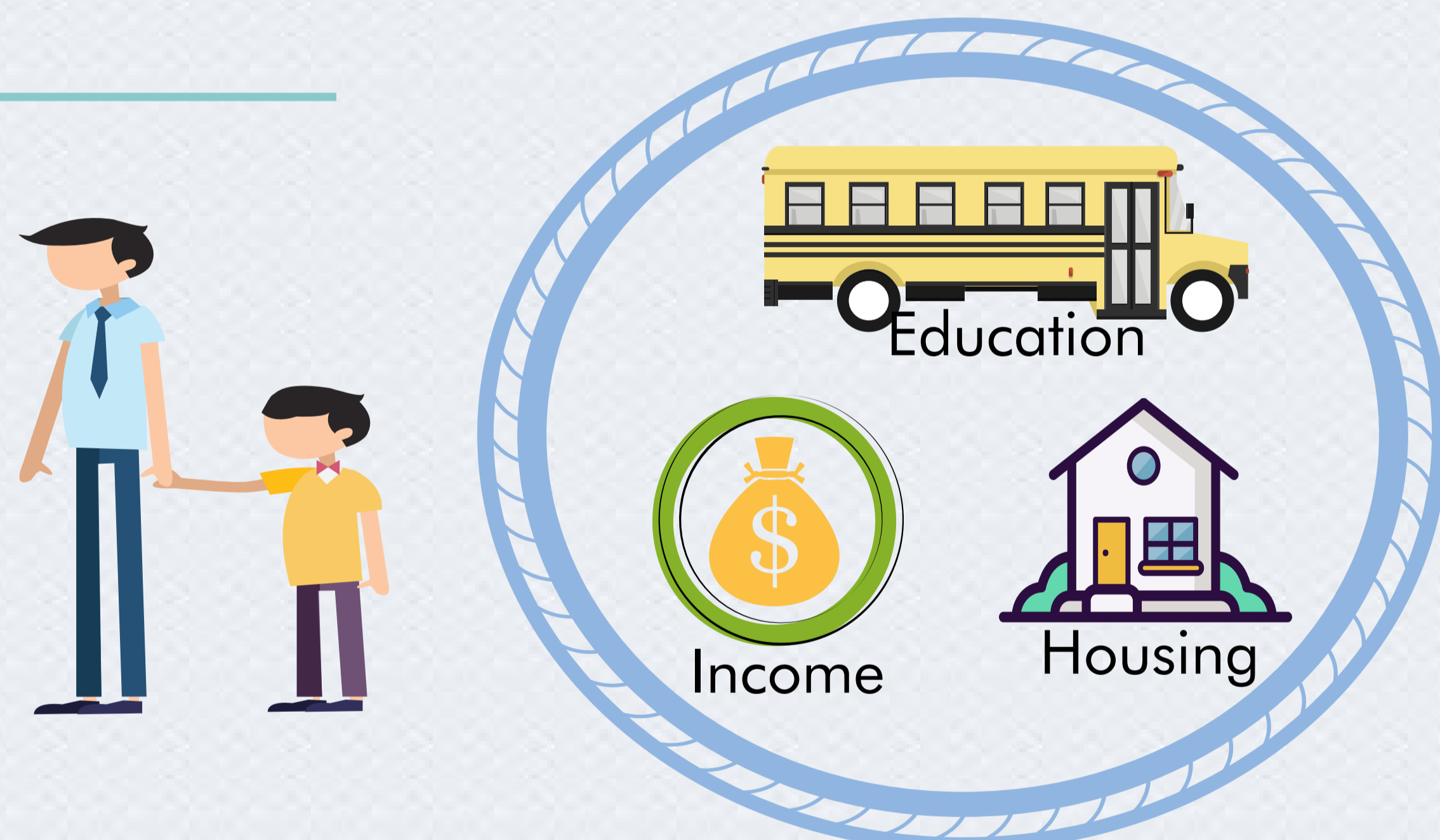
Visits to the emergency department because of hypoglycemia go up 27% in the last week of the month versus the first week in low-income populations.(9)



### Social Environment

Ask patients if there are changes in their life that may impact their disease management and quality of life.

It is also important to identify and connect patients to community resources (e.g., housing, education, financial) and engage social services when necessary.



## What else can you do to support your patients?

- Ask about low blood glucose symptoms at every encounter
- Review medication regimen at every visit
- Help support and encourage a team-based approach to care
- Individualize A1C goals
- Utilize telephone/remote monitoring
- Acknowledge the patient as the expert
- Discuss patient goals and preferences

## Summing it up.....

1. Keep patients and families involved

2. Individualize glycemic goals

3. Engage in shared decision making

4. Identify social needs and comorbidities

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**National Diabetes Education Program**  
- Federally funded program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the National Institutes of Health, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and includes over 200 partners at the federal, state, and local levels, working together to reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with diabetes. Web link: [www.ndep.nih.gov](http://www.ndep.nih.gov) & [www.yourdiabetesinfo.org](http://www.yourdiabetesinfo.org)

**National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse**  
- Service of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK). The NIDDK is part of the National Institutes of Health of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Clearinghouse provides information about diabetes to people with diabetes and to their families, health care professionals, and the public. Web link: [www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov](http://www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov)

**Veterans Affairs/Department of Defense Clinical Practice Guidelines**  
- Provides materials promoting awareness about low blood glucose to Veterans and clinicians. Strong emphasis on the importance of partnering and sharing decision making between patients and whole healthcare team. Web link: [www.healthquality.va.gov/guidelines/CD/diabetes](http://www.healthquality.va.gov/guidelines/CD/diabetes)

**AHRQ Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit**  
Web link: [www.ahrq.gov/literacy](http://www.ahrq.gov/literacy)

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- See <http://www.choosingwisely.org/clinicianlists/american-geriatrics-society-medication-to-control-type-2-diabetes/> for more information on Choosing Wisely Campaign and AGS recommendations.
- See <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/foodnutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/key-statistics-graphics.aspx> for more information on USDA food security statistics.
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