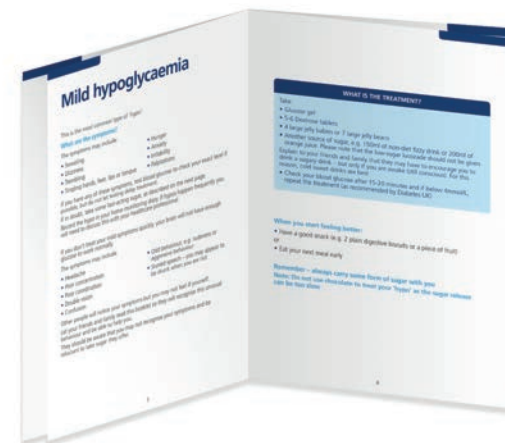


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Novo Nordisk Customer Care
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HELP WITH HYPOS

Who is this booklet for?

This booklet is for people with diabetes and is designed to help you look after yourself and lead an enjoyable lifestyle.

It will provide a quick guide to help you recognise when your blood glucose levels are too low and how to take action.

Friends and family will also find this booklet useful as they can help you manage your diabetes.

If you have any further questions or concerns about your diabetes or its treatment, your Doctor or Diabetes Nurse will be happy to help you.

Checklist

A few useful tips to help with 'hypos'

- ✓ Always carry dextrose tablets or sugar
- ✓ Wear a diabetes identification bracelet/necklace or carry a diabetes emergency card
- ✓ Tell friends, relatives and people at work about 'hypos' and how they can help
- ✓ Don't walk or swim long distances alone
- ✓ Avoid driving if you feel hypoglycaemic or your blood glucose is low
- ✓ Do not miss meals and always take your insulin
- ✓ Test your blood glucose regularly
- ✓ Find out what caused your 'hypo' so you can stop the same thing happening again
- ✓ Visit your doctor regularly to check your diabetes and general health



QUESTIONS

What is a 'hypo'?
Why do 'hypos' occur?
What can cause a 'hypo'?
What does a 'hypo' feel like?
Mild hypoglycaemia
Severe hypoglycaemia
Hypos and driving
Checklist

ANSWERS

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What is a 'hypo'?

'Hypo' is short for **hypoglycaemia**. Hypoglycaemia is the medical term for **low blood glucose**. If your blood glucose level falls below 4mmol/L you are at risk of having a 'hypo'.

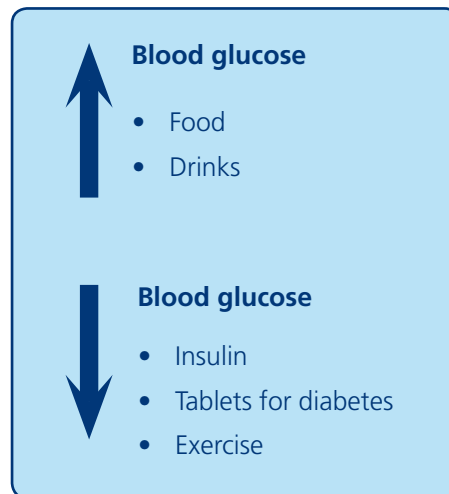
Note: Blood glucose and blood sugar are the same thing

Why do 'hypos' occur?

Maintaining your blood glucose is a balance between:

- The glucose you take in (from food and drink)
- The glucose you use up by exercising
- The glucose lowering effect of insulin or tablets

If blood glucose levels drop too low this is called a 'hypo'.



Hypos and driving



Having a hypo whilst driving could be dangerous for yourself and others.

You can avoid hypos by:

- Checking your blood glucose two hours before getting behind the wheel and every two hours whilst driving
- Do not drive with blood glucose levels under 5mmol/L

If you have symptoms of a hypo whilst driving:

- Pull over as soon as it is safe to do so
- Take the keys out of the ignition
- Move out of the driver's seat
- Have a snack or sweet drink
- Do not drive until 45 minutes after blood glucose has returned to normal and you feel fully recovered

If you require further information please visit the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) website <https://www.gov.uk/contact-the-dvla>

Severe hypoglycaemia

Severe hypoglycaemia happens when blood glucose is low enough that you need another person's help to treat your hypoglycaemia

WHAT IS THE TREATMENT?

Explain to your friends and family that if you become unconscious they will need to:

- **Immediately call for an ambulance**
- Inject you with glucagon if your doctor has prescribed this and provided instructions on how to use it
- Not give you anything by mouth (as you may choke)

When you start feeling better:

- When you are conscious, have a sweet drink (not the diet version) to prevent a further 'hypo'
- Continue to have small amounts of sweet drinks until you feel well enough to eat
- Check your blood glucose level – you may need to adjust your insulin dose

If you have recurring 'hypos' – see your Doctor or Diabetes Specialist Nurse

What can cause a 'hypo'?

'Hypos' can have a number of causes but we don't always know the cause:

- Eating too little or eating less than usual
- Delayed or missed meals/snacks
- Exercising more than usual, e.g.
 - Spring-cleaning the house
 - Digging the garden
 - Dancing at a party
- Too much insulin
- Too many tablets for diabetes
- Alcohol
- Stress or illness
- Vomiting
- Hot weather
- Injecting into a muscle instead of the fatty layer under your skin

What does a 'hypo' feel like?



- The way you feel when your blood glucose is low varies from person to person
- You will soon learn to recognise your own early warning signs and how to take action
- For example, you may feel:
 - Sweaty
 - Dizzy
 - Irritable
- 'Hypos' can be divided into two types:
 - Mild
 - Severe

Mild hypoglycaemia

This is the most common type of 'hypo'.

What are the symptoms?

The symptoms may include:

- Sweating
- Dizziness
- Trembling
- Tingling hands, feet, lips or tongue
- Hunger
- Anxiety
- Irritability
- Palpitations

If you have any of these symptoms, test blood glucose to check your exact level if possible, but do not let testing delay treatment.

If in doubt, take some fast-acting sugar, as described on the next page.

Record the hypo in your home monitoring diary. If hypos happen frequently you will need to discuss this with your healthcare professional.

If you don't treat your mild symptoms quickly, your brain will not have enough glucose to work normally.

The symptoms may include:

- Headache
- Poor concentration
- Poor coordination
- Double vision
- Confusion
- Odd behaviour, e.g. rudeness or aggressive behaviour
- Slurred speech – you may appear to be drunk when you are not

Other people will notice your symptoms but you may not feel ill yourself.

Let your friends and family read this booklet so they will recognise this unusual behaviour and be able to help you.

They should be aware that you may not recognise your symptoms and be reluctant to take sugar they offer.

WHAT IS THE TREATMENT?

Take:

- Glucose gel
- 5-6 Dextrose tablets
- 4 large jelly babies or 7 large jelly beans
- Another source of sugar, e.g. 150ml of non-diet fizzy drink or 200ml of orange juice. Please note that the low-sugar Lucozade should not be given

Explain to your friends and family that they may have to encourage you to drink a sugary drink – but only if you are awake (still conscious). For this reason, cold sweet drinks are best.

- Check your blood glucose after 15-20 minutes and if below 4mmol/L, repeat the treatment (as recommended by Diabetes UK)

When you start feeling better:

- Have a good snack (e.g. 2 plain digestive biscuits or a piece of fruit)
- or
- Eat your next meal early

Remember – always carry some form of sugar with you

Note: Do not use chocolate to treat your 'hypo' as the sugar release can be too slow