HYPO TREATMENT

Hypoglycaemia is when your blood glucose drops to below 3.5mmol/l, with or without symptoms. If you take insulin or certain diabetes tablets, you are at risk of having a hypo. At blood glucose levels below 3.5mmol/l, the brain is not getting enough glucose to function properly.

Symptoms you may experience when having a hypo:

**Mild**
- Tingling
- Feeling hot & sweaty
- Light headed
- Blurred vision
- Hunger
- Dizziness

**Moderate**
- Fast pulse or palpitations
- Trembling or shakiness
- Anxiety or irritability

You will get to know what a hypo feels like for you and should never ignore it. It is common for people who have had diabetes for a long time to become less aware or have no symptoms of a hypo. This is why regular testing of your blood glucose is extremely important.

Common reasons a hypo may occur:

- Taking too much insulin
- Not having regular meals or missing meals
- Not eating enough carbohydrate, or overestimating the amount you’ve eaten
- Stress
- Too much alcohol or drinking alcohol without food
- Recreational Drugs
- Hot weather
- Physical activity, particularly unplanned or unexpected additional activity
STEP 1:
It is important to treat the hypo as soon as you notice the symptoms (or, if you don’t have symptoms, as soon as you record a blood glucose level of below 3.5mmol/l) by taking rapid-acting carbohydrate. This will give a quick rise in blood glucose within 5-10 minutes. The amount of carbohydrate needed is 15-20g and the examples below each contain 15-20g of rapid-acting carbohydrate suitable for treating a hypo.

Examples of rapid-acting carbohydrates containing 15-20g of carbohydrate

If you are at risk of experiencing hypos, it is vital that you carry rapid-acting hypo treatments (such as the examples below) with you at all times.

- **Lucozade Energy**: 15g Carbs, 170ml, 63 Cals
- **Cola**: 16g Carbs, 150ml, 62 Cals
- **Orange Juice**: 20g Carbs, 250ml, 83 Cals
- **Jelly Babies**: 20g Carbs, 25g, 84 Cals
- **Jelly Beans**: 20g Carbs, 22g, 80 Cals
- **Cola Bottles**: 20g Carbs, 27g, 88 Cals
STEP 2:
After taking the rapid-acting carbohydrate, **sit down for 10-15 minutes**.
If you are able, re-check your blood glucose levels to ensure it’s over 3.5mmol/l.
If not, eat more rapid-acting carbohydrate and wait a further 5-10 minutes.

STEP 3:
If your next meal is due in the next hour, you do not need to take any further carbohydrate. If it will be more than 1 hour until your next meal, to avoid the risk of becoming hypo again, you should consider having some slower-acting carbohydrate.

Examples of slower-acting carbohydrates

**Slower-acting carbs are not recommended as the first-line treatment for a hypo.** These foods cause the blood glucose to rise much more slowly and therefore are not suitable for treating a hypo.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sliced Bread (granary)</th>
<th>Banana (with skin)</th>
<th>Mango</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15g Carbs</td>
<td>17g Carbs</td>
<td>11g Carbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33g, medium</td>
<td>130ml</td>
<td>80g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78 Cals</td>
<td>69 Cals</td>
<td>46 Cals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chocolate Honeycomb Balls</th>
<th>Chocolate Oat Biscuit</th>
<th>Milk (semi-skimmed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23g Carbs</td>
<td>12g Carbs</td>
<td>13g Carbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37g</td>
<td>19g</td>
<td>284ml, half pint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>176 Cals</td>
<td>93 Cals</td>
<td>131 Cals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you are experiencing hypos regularly or they are severe and you need the assistance of another person in treating your hypos, you should arrange a review with your diabetes care team or doctor.