

Hypoglycaemia

Any blood glucose level less than 4mmol/L is a hypo and should be treated, even if you feel well.

What are the warning signs?

Hypo warnings vary from person to person. You will generally recognise your own signs that your blood glucose is going to low.

You may feel:

Shaky or dizzy
Anxious or bad tempered
Sweaty
Palpitations at your heart
Hungry
Tingling lips or fingers

Others may notice

Mood change
Irritability or aggression
Irrational behaviour
Confusion
Lack of concentration
Lack of coordination
Colour change e.g. going pale

If you don't have any signs or symptoms when your blood glucose goes below 4mmol/L, tell your diabetes care provider.

What causes a hypo?

Hypos can happen very quickly and may be caused by

- Too much insulin or tablets taken for diabetes
- Too little carbohydrate
- Missed or late meal
- Drinking alcohol without food
- More exercise than usual e.g. housework, walking
- Hot weather
- A change in injection site (maybe away from a lumpy area to a fresh site)
- No obvious reason!

What should I do?

Stop what you are doing and act quickly

- Take some quick acting carbohydrate e.g. 4 glucotabs, 5 dextrose tablets or a glass (150 ml) of full sugar juice such as Coke or Irn Bru. This will raise your blood glucose quickly. (Fatty foods like chocolate and milk act more slowly - don't use them)
- Check after 15 mins to make sure your blood glucose level is above 4mmol/L - if not, repeat the quick-acting carbohydrate.
- Follow up with some slow acting (starchy) carbohydrate e.g. a biscuit, sandwich, glass of milk, or your next meal if you are due to eat. This will prevent your blood glucose from falling again.

If you do not treat a hypo promptly you may need help from a friend or colleague.

Hypo requiring assistance

- A very low blood glucose will make you unconscious or semi-conscious
- A friend can give you a thick gel, called Glucogel (available on prescription). This should be squirted into the inside of your cheek, and can be used if you are confused or semi-conscious, but **not if you are unconscious**.
- An injection of glucagon, a naturally occurring hormone, can be used if Glucogel doesn't work or you are unconscious. It raises your blood glucose by releasing glucose stored from your liver.
- Your doctor or nurse can show a relative or friend how to give glucagon. It takes 10 - 15 minutes to work and may make you sick afterwards.
- As soon as you can safely swallow you should have something starchy to eat.

If glucogel or glucagon don't help your friends should phone 999.

Remember

Always carry something so people know you have diabetes, always carry something to treat a hypo with you.

Tell your friends and colleagues how to help you if you have a hypo around them.

You can obtain the service of an interpreter or have this document translated in your own language by contacting the interpreting services on 0845 130 1170. These services are available free of charge.

ਤੁਸੀਂ, 0845 130 1170 ਤੇ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਆ ਸੇਵਾਵਾਂ (interpreting services) ਨੂੰ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਹ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਜਾਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦਾ ਆਪਣੀ ਬੋਲੀ ਵਿਚ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਲੈ ਸਕਦੇ ਹੋ। ਇਹ ਸੇਵਾਵਾਂ ਮੁਫਤ ਹਨ।

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您可以通過撥打翻譯服務熱線 0845 130 1170 取得翻譯員服務或得到此文件的翻譯版本。 這些服務都是免費的。

Galite prasyti vertejo paslaugu arba gauti sita dokumenta isversta I jusu kalba kreipdamiesi I musu vertimo paslaugu biura skambindami 0845 130 1170. Sitos paslaugos yra nemokamos.

يمكنك الحصول على خدمة الترجمة الفورية أو القيام بترجمة هذه الوثيقة إلى لغتك الأصلية عن طريق الإتصال بخدمات الترجمة الفورية على رقم 0845 130 1170. هذه الخدمات متاحة مجاناً بدون أى مقابل مادي.

Dzwoniąc do biura tłumaczeń pod numer 0845 130 1170 możecie Państwo prosić o tłumacza albo otrzymać ten dokument przetłumaczony na wasz język ojczysty. Powyżej wymienione usługi są darmowe.

If you, or someone you know, would like this in an alternative format, such as audiotape or large print then please phone us free on **0800 456033**, fax your request to **01786 470984** or email us at **FV-UHB.yourhealthservice.nhs.net**

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Carseview House,
Castle Business Park, Stirling FK9 4SW
Tel:01786463031 Fax:01786451474
www.nhsforthvalley.com

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Review