



HYPOGLYCAEMIA

LOW BLOOD SUGAR

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HYPOGLYCAEMIA, also known as **'Hypo'**, is when the glucose levels in your blood drop too low. Ideally you should try and keep your blood glucose levels above 4 mmol/l and below 7 mmol/l at all times.

Hypoglycaemia can be **mild** or **severe** depending on how low your blood glucose levels fall, these levels will vary greatly between individuals. Below are some of the common symptoms to look out for:

Trembling	Impaired speech and vision	Sweating
Difficulty concentrating	Pallor	Dizziness
Nausea	Cramping	Restlessness
Palpitations	Tingling sensation on lips/ or in mouth	

Most people with diabetes will experience some **warning signs** before the onset of hypoglycaemia, these act as a trigger to check and correct blood glucose levels. Some people may experience little or no warning.



HOW TO TREAT HYPOGLYCAEMIA

MILD/MODERATE

Your blood glucose levels will need to be increased promptly. Initial treatment is best with glucose because this form of sugar is most quickly digested and will **raise the blood glucose levels rapidly**. This can be done through taking approximately 10-20 g of **sugar** e.g. 5 or 6 glucose tablets, half a can of a fizzy sugary drink or a handful of sweets such as jelly beans or jelly babies.

SEVERE

Having very low blood glucose levels, usually less than 1-2 mmols, may cause you to become **unconscious**. You will need immediate attention from another person and/or a health-care professional.

PREVENTING HYPOGLYCAEMIA

If you take insulin or oral diabetes medication, it's important that you are **consistent** about the amount and timing of your meals and snacks. The food you eat must be in **balance** with the insulin working in your body. Measuring blood glucose levels on a regular basis will help to make sure that your blood sugar levels remain within your target range.

- **Adjust** your medication or eat additional snacks when you increase your physical activity. The adjustment depends on the blood sugar test results and on the type and length of the activity.
- **Always** make sure you have a suitable carbohydrate snack or meal when drinking alcohol.
- **Keep a record** of any low blood glucose readings as your health-care team will be able to see any patterns and find ways to prevent them.
- **Carry some form of identification** specifying that you have diabetes and your treatment e.g. medical identification necklace, bracelet or wallet card.