

HYPOGLYCAEMIA

PATIENT & CARER INFORMATION LEAFLET

Please take the time to read this leaflet and keep it in a safe place



HYPOGLYCAEMIA is a low blood sugar level and is usually associated with people who have diabetes.

CAUSES OF HYPOGLYCAEMIA

- Too much insulin or oral medications.
- More exercise or activity than usual.
- Missing or delaying meals or snacks, or eating less food than usual.
- Drinking too much alcohol or alcohol without food
- Hot weather
- Change of injection site
- Sometimes there is no obvious cause

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF HYPOGLYCAEMIA

- Slurred speech
- Tingling lips
- Rapid heart beat
- Weakness
- Nervousness
- Tremors
- Headache
- Sweating (cool)
- Confusion / disorientation
- Hunger
- Mood / behaviour change
- Coma / unconsciousness

CONFIRMATION OF HYPOGLYCAEMIA

Check your blood glucose if you suspect you have low blood sugar.

TREAT HYPOGLYCAEMIA WHEN

- Your blood glucose is below 4 mmols/l with or without symptoms.
- You feel you are having a hypo and you are unable to check your blood glucose.

HOW TO TREAT HYPOGLYCAEMIA

Quickly treat with a short-acting carbohydrate such as:

- A glass of lucozade or non-diet drink
- Three or more glucose tablets (from your pharmacy)
- One tube of glucose gel (from your pharmacy)
- A glass of fruit juice
- One tablespoon of honey
- 5 Jelly Babies

Test your blood glucose again ten to fifteen minutes later. Remember to wash your hands before retesting.

If your blood glucose level has not risen above 4 mmols/l, repeat treatment as above.

TO PREVENT your blood glucose level dropping again, you should follow your sugary foods with a longer-acting carbohydrate such as:

- A sandwich
- Fruit
- A bowl of cereal
- Biscuits and milk
- The next meal if due

FOR INFORMATION AND ADVICE



Diabetes UK Careline

Tel: 0845 120 2960, Monday – Friday, 9.00am to 5.00pm

Website: www.diabetes.org.uk

or contact your local Diabetes Specialist Team

IMPORTANT

Do not drive or operate heavy machinery for one hour following full recovery from a hypoglycaemic episode. Take your blood glucose measurement again before setting off.

Following this event it is also important that you contact either your doctor or diabetes team and make an appointment for review.

WARNING

If you are unable to swallow or are unconscious, you should not be given anything by mouth. Someone will need to dial **999**.

WHO TO CONTACT

If your condition does not improve or gets worse in any way contact one of the following...

999

In an emergency dial 999 or 112 and ask the operator for an ambulance response. Always call an ambulance if you think your illness or injury is life threatening. If you are at all unsure, call 999.

Your Doctor

During normal surgery hours contact your doctor.

NHS24

When your GP practice is closed and you can't wait until it opens call NHS24 on 08454 24 24 24.

When you need reliable information about illnesses and conditions, NHS Services and current health issues call 0800 22 44 88 or visit www.NHS24.com

YOUR VIEWS ARE IMPORTANT TO US

Let us know how we can improve the service. We need you to tell us about your experiences, good or bad, and how you would like to see our services improved.

Have an opinion or suggestion? Let us know...

Tel: 0131 4467000

Fax: 0131 4467001

Email: scotamb.corporateaffairs@nhs.net

Write to: Scottish Ambulance Service, Corporate Affairs Manager,
Tipperlinn Road, Edinburgh EH10 5UU

This leaflet can be made available in other languages and formats on request. On occasions a summary will be provided. Please contact the corporate affairs team via email or the telephone number above who will then deal with your request.

To download a copy of this leaflet visit:
www.scottishambulance.com

DATE OF PUBLICATION: MARCH 2009
REFERENCE: SASHYP
NEXT REVISION: MARCH 2010