

# Hypoglycaemia

Hypoglycaemia or a 'hypo' occurs when the level of sugar in the blood falls below 4mmol/l. It can occur if you are on certain diabetes medications or insulin. You doctor or clinical nutritionist will explain if you are at risk of developing low blood sugars.

## Symptoms:

These can vary from one person to another and can include light-headedness, giddiness, sweating, shaking, headache, blurred vision, tingling of lips, hunger and confusion. Occasionally a "hypo" can occur without any symptoms.

## The main causes of hypoglycaemia ('hypo') are:

1. Too much insulin or diabetes tablets
2. Too little carbohydrate with your meal
3. Long gap between your meals
4. Extra, unplanned activity or exercise
5. Excessive alcohol intake or drinking alcohol on an empty stomach

What do you do when you think you are having a "hypo"?



**Act immediately!**

Take 15 - 20g of rapidly absorbed / quick acting carbohydrate e.g.

Drink	Portion	Volume	Carbohydrate Content
Lucozade		100ml	17 g
Cola	1 mini can	150ml	15 g
Dextrose tablets	5	15g	15 g
Fruit juice	1 small carton	200ml	20 g
Fizzy drink e.g. lemonade or orange	1 glass	200ml	15 g

N.B. Be careful not to take too much or your blood sugars may go very high.

Check your blood glucose 10-15 minutes after treating your hypo. If it is still below 4mmol/l take another 15g of carbohydrate from the list above. Once your blood glucose is above 4mmol/l and if you next meal is not due in the next hour, you may choose to take a snack such as:

Bread	1 slice
Digestive	1 biscuit
Milk	200mls / 1 glass