

Hypo information

Hypo management plan*

Name:

Date:

Goal of care:

What is a 'hypo'?

A hypo or (also known as hypoglycaemia or low blood glucose level) occurs in people with diabetes when their blood glucose level (BGL) is too low. Usually, a hypo is less than 4.0mmol/L.

For some people with diabetes who are frail or elderly, a hypo may be less than 5.0 or 6.0mmol/L. This is because avoiding hypos and maintaining safety becomes a greater priority of care.

Am I at risk of hypo?

You are at risk of a hypo if you take insulin or some types of diabetes tablets. Check with your GP or diabetes health professionals. If you are at risk, it is important that you have a hypo management plan.

What causes low blood glucose?

Low blood glucose can be caused by:

- too much insulin or diabetes medicines
- eating less carbohydrates (carbs) than usual
- delayed or missed meal
- drinking alcohol without eating carbs
- fasting, vomiting or diarrhoea
- being more physically active than usual.

What are the signs and symptoms of hypo?

Signs and symptoms are very different for each person and some people have no symptoms at all. You may experience one or more of the following during a hypo.



**trembling
or shaking,
tingling**



**fast heart rate
(palpitations)**



sweaty



hunger



dizziness



**feeling
worried
or afraid**



**drowsiness
or weakness
(it can look
like a stroke)**

Reduced hypo awareness

Sometimes people do not feel the early warning signs and symptoms of a hypo. This may be caused by some medications, having frequent hypos over time, or having had diabetes for many years and alcohol consumption. This can be dangerous because by the time you realise you are having a hypo; you may find it hard to manage it on your own.






Checking blood glucose levels is the best way to know if you are having a hypo. If you cannot check your blood glucose level, it is better to play it safe and treat it immediately as a hypo. Your doctor, diabetes nurse practitioner or diabetes educator can advise on a safe blood glucose target range for you. Make sure people around you - such as family, friends, carers - know how to recognise and treat a hypo.

* If you are using an insulin pump, ask your diabetes health professional for a specific hypo management plan.

Find this resource at ndss.com.au

Step 1

If BGL is less than 4 mmol/L, even when there are no symptoms treat with **15 grams of fast-acting carbohydrate (glucose)**

Fast-acting carbs		15 grams
GlucoJel™ Jellybeans (from pharmacy)		5 jellybeans
Regular soft drink (not diet)		150mL
Lucozade®		100mL
Oral glucose gel		1 tube
Glucose tablets		See product guide
Sugar or honey		3 teaspoons
Fruit juice		125ml

Next steps:

- continue to check BGLs hourly for _____ hours until stable
- try to find out what caused your hypo
- talk to your doctor or diabetes team about the hypo event.

If the person is unconscious or unable to swallow:

- do not give anything by mouth
- a second person may administer glucagon, if trained
- ensure airway is clear and place on side on floor
- call ambulance (dial 000).






Step 2

Monitor BGL after 10-15 minutes and repeat Step 1 and Step 2 until BGL over 4mmol/L.

Step 3

Once your BGL is above 4mmol/L, follow up with 15 grams of slow-acting carbohydrate snack, if your next meal is more than 20 minutes away.

15 grams of slow-acting carbohydrate snack

Slow-acting carbs		15 grams
Fresh fruit		1 medium (apple, banana)
Bread or toast		1 slice
Milk		300mL
Muesli bar		1 bar
A meal that includes carbs		For example, Pasta, basmati rice, sweet potato, corn, or a grain bread sandwich)



Call an ambulance (dial 000) if:

- you vomit more than twice, or
- you cannot eat or drink, or
- if your BGL is less than 4.0 after 2 treatments.