

Are you prepared?

Essential advice for people with diabetes



- ✓ Having a 'hypo' means your blood sugar is too low
- ✓ Test your blood sugar regularly and look out for sweating, dizziness, confusion or blurred vision
- ✓ If you are having a hypo act on it - quickly eat or drink something sugary
- ✓ Never ignore the warning signs, because it won't go away

To find out more about the range of free diabetes information booklets from Roche Diagnostics call the Accu-Chek Customer Careline on

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Get the low-down on hypos



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The low-down on hypos

The best defence against a hypo is regular testing and good control ...it's not a guarantee, but it's worth it.

Emma, 31

If you have diabetes, hypos are one of those things you have to deal with from time to time.

But what is a hypo?

'Hypo' (short for 'hypoglycaemia') is the medical word for low blood sugar and they happen if your blood sugar falls below a certain level (usually less than 4mmol/L).

Although you can't always prevent a hypo from happening - even when doing your best to keep your blood sugar balanced - you can control it if you take action quickly.

That's why it's important you know what a hypo is, how to tell if you are having one and how to act on it.

What can cause a hypo?

They're not very nice, but
being prepared helps. **Tim, 18**

Anything that lowers blood sugar levels,
can give you a hypo.



**Missed
or delayed
meals**



**Eating less
than usual**



Unplanned activity

**Drinking alcohol
(especially on an
empty stomach)**



Illness and stress



**Changes to your
medication**



**Too much
insulin**



**Extremes
of temperature**

Although a mild hypo can feel uncomfortable, it isn't dangerous.

But if you ignore how you're feeling your blood sugar may continue to fall and a mild hypo can turn into a severe one.

This can be dangerous and you could lose consciousness.

What to look out for

Never ignore the warning signs and hope it will go away, because it won't. **Carrie, 46**

The sooner you know your blood sugar's low, the sooner you can do something about it. But everyone reacts to low blood sugar in different ways, so it's important you recognise your early warning signs and then act on them. If you do, you'll have a better chance of stopping your hypo quickly.

Mild hypo signs

- Sweating • Hunger
- Anxiety • Shakes • Paleness
- Rapid heart beat (Palpitations)

Moderate hypo signs

- Irrational/aggressive behaviour
- Weakness • Irritability

Severe hypo signs

- Blurred vision • Drowsiness
- Clumsiness • Confusion
- Appearing to be drunk
- Passing out (unconsciousness)



What if there aren't any warning signs?

If you have had diabetes for many years, or take heart or blood pressure medicine, you may not feel the signs of hypoglycaemia as strongly. This is called 'Hypoglycaemia Unawareness'. It means you must check your blood sugar levels more regularly than most and look out for any sign of it dropping. If you have any questions or concerns about Hypoglycaemia Unawareness, speak to your doctor or diabetes nurse.

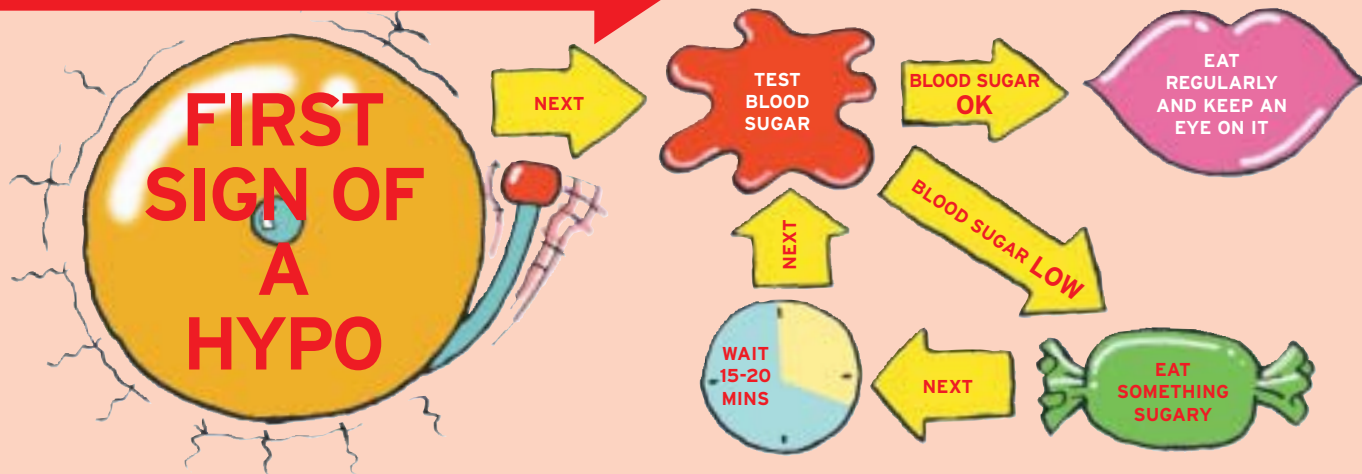
What to do about it

Having a hypo can feel disorientating, so you might find it helpful to have a 'Diabetes Partner'. Your Diabetes Partner should be someone you trust, someone who understands your diabetes and someone who is around you a lot when you may be at risk; like friends, family or work mates.

Sugary foods & drinks

- 2-4 Glucose tablets or sugar lumps
- Pure orange juice/ Lucozade®
- Fizzy drinks (not diet) - a small glass
- Follow-up with a complex carbohydrate e.g. digestive biscuit or bread

Dealing with a mild hypo



Dealing with a severe hypo

If you have a hypo and can't swallow, Hypostop* is a sugary gel you can rub into lips and gums. However, if you fall unconscious you will need immediate treatment, like an emergency GLUCAGON injection. Your Diabetes Partner may be able to inject you and give you a sugary drink when you awake. Failing this someone should dial 999.

It is advisable to carry a MediAlert bracelet, and the card opposite with you, at all times.

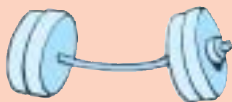
IF I FALL UNCONSCIOUS, OR IN CASE OF EMERGENCY:

- Dial 999 and ask for help
- Do not panic
- Do not inject me with insulin
- Do not give me food or fluids
- Do not restrict my breathing



When to be on the look-out

Down the gym



I find exercise burns up my sugar really quickly. So I eat complex carbohydrates, like potatoes, rice or pasta, about 20 minutes before I start. I also keep a sugary drink with me as a top-up. **Raj, 28**

Out on the town



If I get a hypo it just looks like I'm tipsy, or drunk. That's why I keep a good friend close by - they know what to do if I seem too drunk or get tired quickly from dancing. **Lara, 22**

Feeling poorly



Being unwell with things like colds, flu or fever affects my diabetes. But speaking to my doctor or diabetes nurse helped sort things out. **Susan, 43**

Curled up in bed



Most of my hypos are at night so I have a bedtime snack, especially if I've had a busy day. **Paul, 58**

I HAVE
DIABETES

