

How to treat a day or night-time hypo

- Steps can be taken to manage hypos, including: eating the right things, not skipping meals, taking diabetes medication correctly and not drinking too much alcohol.
- Should you have a hypo and you are conscious, it can be treated immediately with 15–20g of fast acting carbohydrate. For example, a small glass of sugary (non-diet) drink, three glucose tablets or five glucose sweets.
- Retest your blood glucose levels after 15–20 minutes and re-treat if your blood glucose levels are still less than 4mmol/l.
- If you wake up and believe you have had a night-time hypo, the best way to confirm this is to do a blood test. If you are having a hypo, then treat it as described above.

Steps can be taken, such as getting the balance right between diet, exercise and your medication, so it is important to **TALK Hypos** as part of your consultation with your doctor or nurse.



For full information about managing and avoiding day and night-time hypos, speak with your doctor or nurse at your next appointment to ensure that they are appropriately managed.

TALK
hypos
DAY AND NIGHT

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DO YOU HAVE DIABETES?

Do you experience any of the following symptoms during the day or night?

Hypo Symptoms

- Pounding heart?
- Trembling?
- Hunger?
- Drowsiness?
- Sweating?
- Difficulty concentrating?
- Blurred vision?

Night-time Hypo Symptoms

- Morning headache?
- Poor sleep?
- Tiredness?
- Vivid dreams or nightmares?
- Night sweats?



Could you be suffering from hypoglycaemia or 'hypos'? (low blood glucose)?

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What are hypos?

- Hypos (hypoglycaemia) are when glucose in the blood falls to a low level (less than 4mmol/l). Hypos occur most commonly in people with diabetes.
- Hypos are one of the most common diabetes complications experienced by those treated with sulphonylureas or insulin.
- Night-time hypos occur when a person is asleep. They can be a particular concern for people with diabetes as they are unpredictable and hard to detect.

What are the symptoms?

- Hypo symptoms are different for everyone, but they can include: pounding heart, trembling, hunger, sweating, confusion, difficulty concentrating, blurred vision.
- Some people experience severe hypos. If you experience a severe hypo, you may lose consciousness and will need help from another person to treat your symptoms.

What causes hypos?

- You might suffer a hypo because of too much insulin, a missed snack or meal, not eating enough carbohydrate, unplanned exercise, or drinking alcohol without food. However, sometimes there is no obvious reason.
- There may also be other reasons why you have experienced symptoms similar to that of a hypo, so it is important to speak to your healthcare professional to be sure.

Why TALK Hypos?

- Hypos are common, and for some people with diabetes a fear of hypos is one of their biggest concerns.
- Despite this, research shows that people with diabetes don't always report hypos to their doctor or nurse.
- Having repeated hypos can, over time, lead to 'hypo unawareness', where the warning symptoms of a hypo stop being felt, making hypos harder to identify and more difficult to manage.
- Undetected night-time hypos substantially contribute to the development of hypo-unawareness.

- Night-time hypos are also caused by a fall in glucose levels and occur when a person is asleep.
- They can be a particular concern for people with diabetes as they are unpredictable and hard to detect.
- Night-time hypos are common: around 6 in 10 people have experienced at least one night-time hypo in the previous month.
- The symptoms of night-time hypos can include waking up with a headache, poor sleep, tiredness, night sweats and having vivid dreams or nightmares.
- Many people do not report night-time hypos as they mistakenly believe that they are a 'normal' part of diabetes – approximately a third of people with diabetes have never raised the symptoms of night-time hypos with their healthcare professional.
- Night-time hypos have a significant impact on the day-to-day lives of people with diabetes and can lead to absenteeism from work or school, lower productivity, a reduced desire to socialise and exercise.
- Night-time hypos can lead to physical injuries if people become disoriented when waking and getting out of bed.
- If you are concerned about night-time hypos then speak to your doctor or nurse.

What can be done?

- Steps can be taken to better manage hypos, including making changes to lifestyle and treatment options, so it is very important to discuss them as part of your consultation with your doctor or nurse.
- Speaking to your doctor or nurse is the first simple step towards better management of your hypos.

Hypos and driving

There are different severities of hypos and not all mean you risk losing your driving licence. Speak to your healthcare professional, or Diabetes UK, for more information

It's time to TALK Hypos

T

THINK

Do you know what a hypo is?
Do you suffer from hypos?

A

ASK

your doctor or nurse about hypos and discuss them as part of your consultation

L

LEARN

what can be done to better manage your hypos, including lifestyle and treatment options

K

KEEP

track of your hypos for discussion with your healthcare professional

