

What is a “hypo”?

Glucose is a sugar carried in the bloodstream that your body uses for energy. If you have diabetes, your blood glucose levels can become erratic, sometimes becoming very low – this is called hypoglycaemia (or a “hypo”), and can happen when your blood glucose levels drop below 4 mmol/L.

Symptoms

Early signs and symptoms of a hypo include:

- Sweating heavily.
- Feeling anxious.
- Trembling and shaking.
- Tingling of the lips.
- Hunger.
- Going pale.
- Palpitations.

Symptoms may vary from person to person, but you will feel “different” very quickly.

If you miss these early signs, the symptoms may get worse and include:

- Slurring your words.
- Behaving oddly
- Being unusually aggressive or tearful.
- Having difficulty in concentrating.

If you do not treat your hypo at this stage, you may become unconscious

HOW TO TREAT HYPO's (HYPOGLYCAEMIA)

If you recognise that you are having a hypo, you should treat it immediately with something that will raise your blood glucose quickly.

Suitable treatments are:

- 150 mL (a small can) of non-diet fizzy drink,
OR
- 200 mL (a small carton) of smooth orange juice,
OR
- 4–5 GlucoTabs[®], 5–6 dextrose tablets ,
OR
- 4 large jelly babies.

If you do not feel better (or your blood glucose level is still less than 4 mmol/L after 5–10 minutes), repeat ONE of these treatments.

When you start to feel better, and if you are not due to eat a meal, eat some starchy food, like 2 plain biscuits or a small banana.

WARNING

Lucozade TM. Since April 1st 2017, the glucose content in Lucozade TM has been reduced. It varies significantly and may be insufficient in a reasonable volume to treat a hypo.