

HYPOGLYCEMIA: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



WHO IS AT RISK?

People with type 1 or type 2 diabetes who inject insulin and/or take insulin-stimulating tablets (e.g. sulfonylureas) are at increased risk of hypoglycemia.

WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON CAUSES?



TOO HIGH DOSE OF MEDICATION:

An overdose of insulin has been injected or the patient has taken too many tablets, resulting in a risk of hypoglycemia.



INSUFFICIENT FOOD INTAKE:

The amount of food eaten was insufficient for the dose of medication, or the interval between insulin administration and food intake was too long.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:

In case of overexertion or unplanned physical activity, the body consumes additional sugars.



ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION:

Alcohol reduces glucose synthesis by the liver. The body does not have the capacity to counteract hypoglycemia. Alcohol also interferes with the perception of hypoglycemia.

→ Glycemia levels drop sharply

WHAT CAN I DO IN CASE OF HYPOGLYCEMIA?

As soon as the first signs of hypoglycemia appear, you should immediately take fast-acting carbohydrates. What is suitable for you is:



_____ piece(s) of dextrose



_____ glass(es) of fruit juice (0.2L)
or sweetened lemonade



_____ tablespoon(s) of sugar or honey



_____ sweets such as „Gummy Bears“

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HOW DO I RECOGNISE HYPOGLYCEMIA?

Symptoms of hypoglycemia vary greatly from one person to another and may change over time. The first signs, which may appear separately or in combination, are usually:



Rapid pulse, palpitations



Cold Sweats



Pale skin



Dizziness



Cravings



Difficulty to concentrate



Tremors



Jelly legs



Agitation, nervousness or anxiety



Headaches



Weakness or fatigue

WHAT SHOULD I REMEMBER?

- **Hypoglycemia** is when the **blood sugar level is below 3.9 mmol/l (70 mg/dl)**.
- **Hypoglycemia** can sometimes occur **during the night** and often goes unnoticed. However, it does affect the quality of sleep and you may feel tired or even exhausted when you wake up.
- In case of **hypoglycemia while driving**: stop, eat or drink fast digesting carbohydrates and check blood sugar level.
- It is useful to always have a **diabetes card** with you, so that other people are aware of your situation and can provide the necessary help.



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WHAT CAN I DO IN CASE OF HYPOGLYCEMIA?



It may be helpful to keep a diary of your blood glucose levels, meals and physical activity to help identify the causes of low blood glucose. This diary will allow you, with the help of your doctor and your diabetes counselor, to develop optimal measures.



Hypoglycemia is always a complication and requires immediate action in all cases. Talk to your doctor about how best to manage hypoglycemia.



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