



# Hypoglycaemia

## What is it?

Hypoglycaemia is low blood sugar and it's one of the most common problems related to diabetes.

Taking too much medication, not eating enough or exercising a lot might cause low blood sugar in people with diabetes. If untreated, low blood sugar can cause serious health risks. Some people with low blood sugar have no symptoms. Others might have shakes, hunger, sweating and mood changes.

## What will my GP do now?

Your GP will identify the causes of your low blood sugar. Your GP will also:

- Test your blood sugar levels
- Assess your medication and doses
- Educate you on the signs and symptoms of low blood sugar
- Review your fitness to drive and operate heavy machines
- Ensure you have a glucagon emergency kit at home
- Refer you to a local diabetes specialist if needed

## What will my GP do in the future?

Your GP will continue to check your health and review your medication. You may need to record your symptoms and keep a seven-day record of your blood glucose.

Your GP may also refer you for diabetes education if needed.

## What can I do?

- Always carry carbohydrates with you, and carry ID that states you are diabetic. Keep a record of all episodes of low blood sugar.
- Try to work out the reason for your low blood sugar so you can prevent it.

If you suspect low blood sugar, follow the

The Rule of **15**

Eat 15 grams of fast-acting carbohydrate, e.g.

- Five medium size jelly beans
- Half a glass of fruit juice or non-diet soft drink
- Three teaspoons of sugar or honey

Wait 15 minutes and retest blood sugar

If your blood sugar is still < 4.0mmol/l, repeat the steps above.

If your next meal is more than 15 minutes away, eat a long acting carbohydrate, e.g.

- A piece of fruit
- A glass of milk
- A sandwich
- A small tub of low-fat yoghurt
- Two or three pieces of dried fruit

## When should I call an ambulance?



If you or someone you know is having a severe episode of hypoglycaemia, phone Triple 000 immediately

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## What supports are available?

### Local hospital diabetes services

Local hospitals run diabetes clinics for those who need specialist care. These clinics can provide assessment, treatment and education.

- Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital Diabetes Service: Phone 9722 8366
- Fairfield Hospital Diabetes Service: Phone 8738 4577
- Bowral District Hospital Diabetes Service: Phone 4861 0303
- Liverpool Hospital Diabetes Service: Phone 8738 4539
- Macarthur Diabetes Service (Campbelltown/Camden Hospital): Phone 4634 4028

### Private specialists

Your GP can refer you to a private specialist.



## What questions could I ask my doctor?

- What is my strategy to prevent low blood sugar?
- What foods should I carry with me?
- How do I know if I'm having an episode of low blood sugar?
- What can I do if I'm having an episode?
- Where can I learn more about prevention?



## Where can I learn more?

If you'd like to learn more about low blood sugar, the following resources can help:

- **Diabetes Australia:** [diabetesaustralia.com.au](http://diabetesaustralia.com.au)
  - [Hypoglycaemia](#)
  - [Multicultural Diabetes Portal](#)
- **Queensland Health** – Administering Glucagon for Severe Hypoglycemia: [health.qld.gov.au](http://health.qld.gov.au)

This information is to be viewed by someone who has received a diagnosis from their doctor. It is not designed to be used to diagnose a condition or as a substitute for ongoing medical care

Health Resource Directory factsheets are endorsed by South Western Sydney PHN's Community Advisory Committee and local GPs