

A Guide For People Taking Tablets To Control Their Diabetes



This should make you feel better quickly, then you need to eat some form of long acting carbohydrate in order to maintain your blood sugar level. So if you are not due to have a main meal then have a sandwich or some cereal or plain biscuits to keep you going till your next meal.

If you do not feel better within 20-30 minutes consider calling a doctor or even an ambulance.

If you are suffering from frequent 'hypo' episodes then you need to inform your doctor or diabetes team as your treatment may need altering.

Signs of a 'hypo':

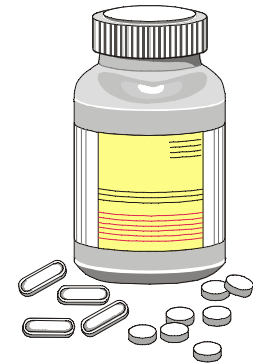
- ❖ Blood sugar test less than 4
- ❖ Feeling shaky and trembling or dizzy
- ❖ Sweating
- ❖ Headache
- ❖ Feeling of hunger
- ❖ Blurred vision
- ❖ Feeling of confusion or agitation
- ❖ Change in colour, ashen, pale
- ❖ Sudden loss of energy, feeling of weakness
- ❖ Tingling of lips



You may not experience all of these signs at the same time, just one or two could be sufficient to alert you to the 'hypo'.

Why a 'hypo' may occur:

- ❖ Insufficient carbohydrate intake, such as a missed meal or very late meal
- ❖ Extra or unexpected physical activity
- ❖ Too high a dosage of tablets
- ❖ Illness such as diarrhoea and vomiting
- ❖ Interaction of other tablets (always ensure your doctor knows of other tablets you may be taking)
- ❖ Taking the tablets at the wrong time, such as after meals or at bedtime



Metformin on its own will not cause a hypo.

What to do if signs of 'hypo' occur:

- ❖ If possible check your blood sugar level, a reading of less than 4 is too low
- ❖ Eat or drink something sweet straight away, such as 3 glucose tablets (Dextrosol, Lucozade)

or

- ❖ 3 level teaspoons of sugar in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of water

or

- ❖ 2 sweet biscuits or 3-4 pieces of chocolate

or

- ❖ $\frac{1}{2}$ a glass of sugary drink like lemonade or lucozade

or

- ❖ A glass of milk with a sweet biscuit



For people with diabetes it is important to maintain good blood glucose control, ideally between 4-8mmol. This helps to prevent future complications of diabetes. Diet is the cornerstone of all treatment. Following a healthy eating plan and taking regular exercise is essential to achieving good control. In addition to this some people may also need to take medication.

As your blood sugar level has been too high your doctor has prescribed tablets which will help to reduce this, along with your diet and regular exercise. As the action of these tablets is to reduce your blood sugar level then they also have the potential to lower it too much which would cause you to become hypoglycaemic, have a 'hypo'. Therefore it is important that you and your family know what the signs are, why it may occur and what to do in the event of a 'hypo'.

