

# Patient information

## Self-treatment of hypoglycaemia - low blood sugar/glucose

For the treatment of hypoglycaemia (in adults), we recommend the following:

If your blood glucose is under 4 mmol/l:

- take 15 to 20g of quick acting carbohydrate (see table below)
- wait for 10 to 15 minutes and then test again (after washing your hands)
- if your blood glucose is still under 4 mmol/l, take a further 15 to 20g of quick-acting carbohydrate
- wait for 10 to 15 minutes and test again

Quick acting carbohydrate	Amount that contains 15-20g carbohydrate (approximate figures)
Dextrose/glucose tablets	4 to 5 tablets
Lucozade (Energy original)	170 to 220 ml
Lucozade (sport)	250 to 290 ml
Maynards Wine Gums	4 to 5 sweets
Bassetts Jelly Babies	3 to 4 sweets
*Coca-Cola (not diet)	150 to 190 ml

\*Other brands of Cola may contain less sugar, so a greater volume than stated above will be required



There is a possibility that your blood glucose level could drop again so once your blood glucose level is above 4mmol/l it is important to eat some slow-release carbohydrate containing food. If it is time for a meal then have your meal, otherwise you should have a snack (approx. 15g of carbohydrate) for example:

- a piece of toast **or**
- 2 digestive biscuits / 3 rich tea biscuits **or**
- a small bowl of cereal **or**
- a piece of fruit **or**
- 300 to 350 ml glass of regular cow's milk (milk alternatives may contain different amounts of carbohydrate)

To be safe, carry fast-acting carbohydrates with you at all times.

### Remember: Something SWEET then something STARCHY

**Flash sensors & CGM sensors:** If your symptoms don't match your sensor glucose reading, it is recommended that you do a finger prick to check your blood glucose level, as this is more accurate.

If you are unable to treat your 'hypo' yourself, or you are not recovering despite appropriate treatment, an ambulance should be called.

For further information about treating low blood glucose levels, contact your local diabetes care nurse, dietitian or doctor.

## Sources of information

- **Diabetes UK South East** - Telephone: **01372 720 148**
- **Diabetes UK Helpline (confidential)** -Telephone: **0345 123 2399** (*Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm*) / Email: [helpline@diabetes.org.uk](mailto:helpline@diabetes.org.uk) / Website: [www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk)

## Important information

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

## Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the patient experience team on 0300 131 4784 or [esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net).

## Hand hygiene

We are committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

## Other formats

**If you require any of our leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department on 0300 131 4434 or [esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net)**

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Reference

The directorate group that have agreed this patient information leaflet: Diabetes departments at Conquest Hospital or Eastbourne District General Hospital.

Next review date: February 2026

Responsible clinician: Josie Townsend, Lead Diabetes Specialist Dietitian

© East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust – [www.esht.nhs.uk](http://www.esht.nhs.uk)