



# Hypoglycaemia (low blood glucose)

Information for people living in or visiting the residential aged care facility

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Hypoglycaemia is sometimes known as a 'hypo.'

Hypoglycaemia (low blood glucose) can happen to anyone with diabetes.

Hypoglycaemia can cause heart and other circulation problems and increase your risk of falling.

Hypoglycaemia can happen if you take your diabetes medication (Insulin or tablets) and then do not eat enough, or if you exercise more than usual.

Hypoglycaemia can happen if you are unwell and don't feel like eating or have lost weight.

There is an increase of hospital admission associated with hypoglycaemia.

## How do I know I'm hypoglycaemic

You may experience some or all of these:

- sweating
- headache
- fast heartbeat
- sudden hunger
- feeling shaky
- feeling irritable
- blurred vision.

If you experience any of the above have 6 or 7 jellybeans, or a soft drink/orange juice and call the staff for help.

It is important to treat your low blood glucose quickly to prevent it from dropping further.

## Ways to prevent hypoglycaemia

- Check, or have staff check, your blood glucose levels on a regular basis.
- Take your medicines as directed.
- Make sure you eat and drink enough.



- If you lose weight you may need to have your medicine adjusted by your doctor.
- If you feel unwell let the staff know so they can monitor your blood glucose levels as needed.

## Severe hypoglycaemia

If your blood glucose drops too low, you may experience a faint and/or lose consciousness. If this happens you won't be able to treat yourself.

Alert the staff as soon as you start to experience any of the symptoms of a low blood glucose.

Staff will assist you and may need to call an ambulance and take you to hospital. If your family or friends are with you, they can call for the staff to assist and provide first-aid to make sure you get the help you need.

## Working together

You, your family and friends are important members of the care team. You know what is normal for you.

Let staff know if you notice any changes, feel unwell, dizzy, shaky, or just feel irritable. Don't wait to see if you get better – it's always best to get help early.

Working together with staff will help to keep you healthy and out of hospital.

Talk to staff and ask questions. They need your help to give you the best care.

## Questions to ask staff

- What is my diabetes management plan?
- Will my diabetes get worse?
- How will my diabetes affect me in the long term?
- What can I do to help manage my diabetes?



## Want to know more?

Read about [hypoglycaemia](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/hypoglycaemia) on Better Health Channel <<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/hypoglycaemia>>.

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Available from the [Department of Health residential aged care information web page](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/residential-aged-care/participating-with-consumers)

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