

Severe hypoglycaemia

If you have experienced a severe hypoglycaemic episode involving loss of consciousness in any situation, do not resume driving until you have medical clearance to do so. Your diabetes specialist will need to determine your fitness to safely resume driving.

High Blood Glucose (hyperglycaemia)

You should not drive if you feel unwell. High blood glucose levels can result in tiredness, blurred vision and altered decision making, all of which impact on driving.

You also need to know

- It is your legal responsibility to advise the Land Transport Authority that you have diabetes and whether or not you take glucose lowering medications including insulin.
- There may be conditions placed on your drivers licence because of your diabetes
- You will need to plan ahead for your specialist clinic in relation to your fitness to drive. You will be expected to provide **an accurate blood glucose level logbook demonstrating a trend of regular daily blood glucose monitoring (at least 4/day), your corresponding blood glucose meter and a satisfactory HbA1c (HbA1c target 58mmol)** before the Starship Diabetes Service will provide a letter of support endorsing your application to drive.

Driving is Serious



DRIVING AND DIABETES

Starship Children's Health
Adolescent Transition Service
Phone: 631 0790 option 2
2012 R Hornung

Get More Info at:

<http://www.landtransport.govt.nz/factsheets/16.html>

Information taken from Diabetes Australia NDSS publication "Diabetes and Driving," August 2011.

Can I drive if I have Diabetes?

It is a privilege to drive a motor vehicle and with it comes major personal and legal responsibilities. Driving is a complex skill both physically and mentally and for people with diabetes who drive, extra precautions need to be taken to help maximise road safety. The main hazard for those who take insulin is the unexpected occurrence of hypoglycaemia but most episodes can be prevented.



- Test your blood glucose and ensure it is above 5mmol/L before driving
- Make sure your blood glucose is above 5 every 2 hours during driving
- At all times, carry a fast acting carbohydrate food (or drink) with you as well in the vehicle.
- If you suspect hypo while driving, pull over safely, eat something sweet (at least 15grams glucose) to treat the hypo and follow this up with some longer acting carbohydrate. Ensure your blood glucose rises above 5. Wait at least 30minutes after the blood glucose reads above 5 and confirm it remains above 5 before driving again.

How to avoid low blood glucose whilst driving

- Ensure your blood glucose is over 5 mmol/L both before and every 2 hours during driving
- Keep a record of blood glucose levels
- Always carry in your car a fast acting food or sweet drink in your car
- DO NOT drive for more than 2 hours without considering a snack and do not miss or delay a meal. Stay above 5 during your vehicle journey
- Carry identification both on yourself and in your car indicating that you have diabetes.

If you feel a hypo developing while driving

- ✓ STOP driving as soon as it is safe to do so
- ✓ Remove the ignition key
- ✓ Check your blood glucose level
- ✓ IMMEDIATELY eat at least 15grams of fast acting carbohydrate or have a sugary drink
- ✓ Wait 15minutes and check your blood glucose level again. Repeat treatment if required
- ✓ Follow this up by taking a longer acting carbohydrate (fruit, bread, mil, muesli bar)
- ✓ DO NOT resume driving until at least 30minutes after your hypo symptoms are completely gone and your blood glucose is above 5. Studies have shown that brain function may take this long to recover.



Lack of hypoglycaemia awareness

Lack of hypoglycaemia awareness is when a person does not recognise the symptoms of hypoglycaemia to enable treatment before brain function is affected. This is a serious condition that increases the risk of severe hypoglycaemia.

Hypoglycaemia, or low blood glucose (below 4mmol/L) may develop quickly and normal hypoglycaemia awareness includes "early warning symptoms" of trembling, sweating, dizziness, hunger or headache. When blood glucose falls further, symptoms due to lack of glucose supply to the brain may occur and include lack of concentration/behaviour change, irritability, double vision and a reduced level of consciousness.

Even when blood glucose is low, some people have few or no symptoms of hypoglycaemia at all, including loss of the early warning symptoms of low blood glucose. They may then become confused and even lose consciousness without ever knowing their blood glucose levels were low. This condition is called lack of hypoglycaemia awareness.

Under these circumstances, it is especially important to monitor blood glucose prior to and regularly during driving to help avoid severe hypoglycaemia and reduce the risk of a crash. **It is critical to be above 5 when you drive.** People with hypoglycaemia unawareness in general are not eligible to drive.

