

Preparing for a gastroscopy when you have diabetes

Information and advice for patients

Endoscopy

As preparation for your gastroscopy you should not eat or drink for 6 hours before the test. Because of this, there is an increased risk that your blood sugar level could become too low (this is hypoglycaemia or a 'hypo'). The enclosed leaflet gives you more detailed information about hypoglycaemia.

You may also have higher blood sugar levels than normal for a couple of days around the time of the test, but they should return to normal after that.

What are the symptoms of hypoglycaemia?

The symptoms of hypoglycaemia include:

- Feeling shaky
- Dizziness
- Sweating even when it is not warm
- Hunger
- Weakness
- Fast heart beat or palpitations

What should I do if I have the symptoms of hypoglycaemia?

If you have any of these symptoms, or if you normally test your blood sugar level and it drops below 5mmol/L, you should have some dextrose tablets or drink sugary drinks such as:

- Fizzy drinks (not diet or sugar-free)
- Energy drinks, such as Lucozade
- Smooth orange juice (no bits)
- 4 teaspoons of sugar dissolved in 200ml of water

If you have had to do this within 6 hours before your gastroscopy, please let the nurses know when you arrive at the hospital.

How to prepare for your gastroscopy

If you take diabetic tablets

Morning appointment

- Do not take your tablets on the morning of your test.
- Do not have anything to eat or drink.

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- If you usually check your blood sugar level, check this every 2 hours while you are awake.
- If your blood sugar level is below 5mmol/L or you have any of the symptoms of hypoglycaemia, have a sugary drink as described above.

Afternoon appointment

- Take your normal morning dose of diabetic tablets with a light breakfast.
- Stop eating and drinking 6 hours before your appointment time.
- Do not take your midday/ lunchtime dose of diabetic tablets.
- If you usually check your blood sugar level, check this every 2 hours while you are awake.
- If your blood sugar level is below 5mmol/L or you have any of the symptoms of hypoglycaemia, have a sugary drink as described earlier.

If you take insulin

Morning appointment

- On the day of the test take half your usual morning dose of insulin.
- Check your blood sugar level every hour.
- If your blood sugar level is below 5mmol/L or you have any of the symptoms of hypoglycaemia, have a sugary drink as described above.
- Bring your insulin to the hospital with you.

Afternoon appointment

- Have half your morning dose of insulin with a light breakfast.
- Stop eating and drinking 6 hours before your appointment time.
- Do not take any lunchtime doses of insulin.
- Check your blood sugar level every 2 hours.
- If your blood sugar level is below 5mmol/L or you have any of the symptoms of hypoglycaemia, have a sugary drink as described above.
- Bring your insulin to the hospital with you.

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After your gastroscopy

After the test, once you are eating again, you can return to taking your tablets or insulin as normal.

If you normally check your blood sugar level, check it every 2 hours for the first 4 hours after the test, and then every 4 hours for the next 2 days.

If you do not normally have to check your blood sugar level, watch out for the symptoms of a hypo and take sugary drinks as necessary.

Contact details

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the diabetes specialist nurses.

City Hospital: 0121 507 6007

Sandwell Hospital: 0121 507 3063

Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm

Further information

For more information about our hospitals and services please see our websites www.swbh.nhs.uk and follow us on Twitter @SWBHnhs and like us on Facebook www.facebook.com/SWBHnhs.

Sources used for the information in this leaflet

NHS Diabetes, 'Management of adults with diabetes undergoing surgery and elective procedures: improving standards', April 2011

If you would like to suggest any amendments or improvements to this leaflet please contact the communications department on 0121 507 5303 or email: swb-tr.swbh-gm-patient-information@nhs.net



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