



Information for drivers with diabetes treated by non insulin medication, diet, or both.



Please keep this leaflet safe so you can refer to it in the future

Car and motorcycle drivers do not need to tell us if their diabetes is treated by tablets, diet, or both and they are free of the complications listed over the page. There are different rules if you have passed your test to drive lorries or buses (group 2). Please visit gov.uk/diabetes-driving

Some people with diabetes develop associated problems that may affect their driving.

If your diabetes is treated by tablets carrying hypoglycaemia risk (for example Gliclazide, Glimepiride, Glipizide, Repaglinide or Nateglinide) you should monitor your blood glucose levels at times relevant to driving. Further details on testing are available in Assessing fitness to drive a guide for medical professionals. If you are unsure whether you should monitor blood glucose you should discuss this with your healthcare professional, as to whether this advice applies to you.

Hypoglycaemia (low blood glucose)

Hypoglycaemia (also known as a hypo) is the medical term for a low blood glucose (sugar) level.

Severe hypoglycaemia means an episode of low blood glucose needing help from another person. The risk of hypoglycaemia is the main danger to safe driving and can occur with diabetes treated with insulin or tablets or both. This may endanger your own life as well as that of other road users. Many of the accidents caused by hypoglycaemia are because drivers carry on driving even though they get warning signs of hypoglycaemia. If you get warning signs whilst driving, stop the vehicle safely as soon as possible. Switch off the engine, remove the keys from the ignition and move from the driver's seat. **Do not ignore the warning signs.**

Sleep hypoglycaemic episodes

If you have frequent sleep hypoglycaemic episodes, while this will not affect your application for a driving licence, you should discuss them with your healthcare professional.

Early symptoms of hypoglycaemia include:

- Sweating, shakiness or trembling, feeling hungry, fast pulse or palpitations, anxiety, tingling lips.

If you don't treat this it may result in more severe symptoms such as:

- Slurred speech, difficulty concentrating, confusion, disorderly or irrational behaviour, which may be mistaken for drunkenness.

If left untreated this may lead to unconsciousness.

What you need to tell us about

By law you must tell us if any of the following applies:

- You suffer more than one episode of severe hypoglycaemia within the last 12 months whilst awake. You must also tell us if you or your healthcare professional feel you are at high risk of developing severe hypoglycaemia. For lorry and bus (group 2) drivers, one episode of severe hypoglycaemia must be reported immediately.
- You develop impaired awareness of hypoglycaemia. (Difficulty in recognising the warning signs of low blood glucose).

- You suffer severe hypoglycaemia whilst driving.
- Your diabetes is treated with insulin.
- You have had laser treatment or eye surgery to both eyes or in the remaining eye if you only have sight in one eye.
- You have problems with vision in both eyes, or in the remaining eye if you only have sight in one eye. By law, you must be able to read, with glasses or corrective lenses if necessary, a car number plate from 20 metres and have a visual acuity of at least 6/12 (decimal 0.5).
- You develop any problems with your limbs that affect your ability to control your vehicle safely and you have to drive a vehicle with special controls, for example automatic vehicles, or vehicles with a hand operated accelerator or brake. This must be shown on your driving licence.
- An existing medical condition gets worse or you develop any other condition that may affect you driving safely.

In the interests of road safety, you must be sure that you can safely control a vehicle at all times and meet the required testing standards.

How to tell us

If you need to report your condition to us, you can tell us online at gov.uk/report-driving-medical-condition or fill in a medical questionnaire about diabetes (DIAB1). You can download this from gov.uk/driving-medical-conditions

Phone: 0300 790 6806.

Write to: Drivers Medical Group
DVLA
Swansea
SA99 1TU

Useful address

Diabetes UK
Wells Lawrence House
126 Back Church Lane
London
E1 1FH

Diabetes UK Website:
diabetes.org.uk

Keep up to date with our latest news and services.
gov.uk/dvla