

Day surgery and procedures

for people with diabetes

For people with diabetes there are important considerations and precautions needed when having day surgery or a procedure requiring fasting, other preparations and general anaesthesia. Here's a few tips to help you plan for your day surgery and to look after your diabetes during and after the procedure.

Planning for the procedure

- Before the day surgery, arrange a review of your diabetes management by your diabetes specialist, local doctor or diabetes educator to make sure your diabetes is well controlled.
- Before the review, aim to test your blood glucose levels more often. For example, if you're not already testing four times a day on two days a week or more, do so for about two weeks and remember to keep a written record that will help during the review.

Make sure you tell everyone involved in the procedure, such as doctors, surgeons, anaesthetists and nurses, that you have diabetes and how it's treated. Also tell them about any other medical conditions you have and medications you are taking (including complementary therapies).

- When making the appointment for the procedure, ask to be scheduled first on the morning list so your diabetes is disrupted as little as possible.
- The person doing the procedure or arranging your appointment will give you verbal and written instructions about what needs to be done before and on the day. If you need an interpreter, there is usually no cost in public hospitals for this service. However it must be arranged in advance.
- If you have any doubts about the arrangements or the procedure in relation to your diabetes, discuss your concerns beforehand with the person performing the procedure, your local doctor, diabetes specialist or educator.
- Also ask your diabetes specialist or educator about acceptable 'hypo' treatment. If a 'hypo' occurs on the day, it's best to be prepared.
- Changes to your insulin and diabetes tablets, particularly metformin, are often required before and after day procedures or surgery. This should always be discussed with the doctor or person doing the procedure and/or the doctor helping you manage your diabetes.

The day before and day of the procedure

- Testing your blood glucose levels at least four times a day is advised for the day before and the day of the procedure, depending on how early you're booked in.
- Contact your local doctor, diabetes specialist, diabetes educator or the centre performing the procedure if your blood glucose level is:
 - more than 10mmol/L before meals
 - more than 15mmol/L two hours after meals
 - less than 4mmol/L
 OR
 - ketones are present (type 1)
- Take with you all the medications you are currently taking, or a list that says how much and how often you take all your medications including insulins, eye drops, over-the-counter medications and herbal preparations.
- If hypoglycaemia occurs, it **MUST** be treated. If a 'hypo' has been experienced **during preparation for the procedure**, the doctor or person performing the procedure must be told about the 'hypo' and how to treat it. This treatment must be used **before the procedure or surgery commences**.
- For people with type 1 diabetes, insulin should not be delayed for more than 3 hours. If this becomes necessary, hospital admission and intravenous fluids and insulin are often advised.

After the procedure is over

- It is very important to have a friend or relative take you home. Discuss this with the doctor or person doing the surgery or procedure.
- Check any other driving restrictions.
- When you get home, rest.

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The contents of this information sheet have been provided by Diabetes Australia. It was reviewed by Diabetes Australia's Health Care & Education Committee (HCEC) in November 2005 and is endorsed for publication until November 2007. Do not distribute after this date.

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