

Information for school staff and invigilators Re: Exams and Diabetes

There may be pupils with diabetes in your school who will be undertaking exams. Although the young person will be working hard to maintain optimal blood sugar control, the stress of exams can result in either high or low blood sugars, which can be difficult to predict and can effect exam performance.

Please note the advice below is relevant to all pupils with Type 1 Diabetes **and** those with Type 2 Diabetes who are on insulin.

Our advice is as follows:

- Allow the young person to bring their blood glucose meter into the exam so that they can test their blood sugar if they feel hypo or unwell during the exam. [Note: blood sugar meters can be silenced in the same way as a mobile phone so testing a blood sugar should not disturb other pupils].
- Inform the invigilator if the young person is wearing an insulin pump as they may need to operate it during the exam.
- Increasingly children and young people with diabetes use continuous or flash glucose technology to help them monitor their glucose levels and often specially designed mobile phone apps to use these devices, to calculate doses of insulin and/or to operate insulin pumps. We suggest teachers speak to pupils with diabetes discreetly ahead of exams to determine if they will need to refer to their mobile phone during exams for this purpose.
- Allow the young person to bring hypo (low blood sugar) remedies into the exam (this might include a sugary drink, sweets or a snack.). [Note: we would expect pupils to choose hypo remedies which cause minimal disruption to others].
- Allow the young person to treat their hypo in the examination room if desired. In order to ensure their blood sugar has come into the normal range they are likely to need to retest their blood sugar again 15 minutes later or refer to their continuous glucose monitor/mobile phone app for this purpose.
- Allow them to bring in water (high blood sugars can cause excessive thirst).
- Allow them supervised toilet breaks, within reason, as high blood sugars can cause frequent urination.
- Occasionally a pupil may need to leave an exam to give an insulin injection or change a pump set. Please allow them to do this if requested with appropriate supervision as per exam invigilator regulations.
- Please do not automatically assign a separate room for a young person with diabetes to take their exam but look at the individual circumstances – pupil's preference and what reasonable adjustments can be made to ensure exam regulations are still followed.
- Consider the need for extra exam time if for example a young person has needed to treat a hypo, change a pump set during an exam. It is generally accepted that normal cognitive function returns 45 minutes after a hypo and changing a pump set or giving an injection takes approximately 15 minutes.

Please inform all invigilators who the pupils are with diabetes at the start of the examination and provide them with this information leaflet.

We hope the information contained above has been helpful.

Please do not hesitate to contact the team if you require any further information.