



Driving with Diabetes

Rules for the Road

Driving is a privilege and a huge responsibility. Driving when your blood glucose is low is like driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol. By following these guidelines you can prevent harm and injury to yourself and others.

If you have developed hypoglycemia unawareness and are not able to recognize when your BG is low, you should not drive until you consult your diabetes health care provider. Hypoglycemia unawareness can put you and others at great risk for an accident.

Check your blood sugar before you get behind the wheel, even if you are feeling well!



If your blood sugar is < 70 eat a 15 gram carb snack and re-check in 15 minutes – even if you are feeling well!

If your blood sugar is between 70 and 90 and you feel well, eat a snack and recheck in 15 minutes.

If you feel well and your blood sugar is > 90 you are safe to drive!

Before you head on the road, make sure you are prepared!

1. Make sure you are wearing your MedAlert necklace or bracelet.
2. Make sure you have your meter and test strips as well as all of your diabetes supplies.
3. Make sure you have plenty of snacks – including a quick-acting source of sugar.
4. Check your blood sugar every hour if you are driving long distances.

If you feel signs of low blood glucose pull over as soon & safely as possible!



Do not ignore early warning symptoms or attempt to “ride out” the low until you get to your destination. Early treatment can prevent a mild low BG from becoming a major event with life-threatening consequences.

If your blood glucose is low, eat a snack that contains a fast-acting sugar such as glucose tablets or gel, juice, regular soda, or candy. Wait 10-15 minutes and check your BG again to make sure it is above 90 before you resume driving.

Developed by the Washington University/St. Louis Children’s Hospital Diabetes Team 2015

Know the Laws!

The laws regarding driving and diabetes vary by state.

ILLINOIS: Both the first-time and renewal application asks if the applicant has any condition which may result in temporary loss of consciousness and if the applicant has any mental or physical condition that might interfere with safe driving. **If you are treated for diabetes you must answer “yes”.** You may need to have a physician sign the medical agreement contained in that report.

MISSOURI: Both the first-time and renewal application asks an applicant whether he or she has experienced convulsions, epilepsy, or blackouts; paralysis; heart attack, heart disease, or stroke; or “other” medical conditions within the preceding six months. If an applicant answers yes to any of these questions, he or she may need to undergo a medical examination to determine an individual’s fitness to operate a motor vehicle safely.

If you are not checking your BG as recommended, it is not safe to drive and your healthcare provider may not sign the agreement.



Resources:

<http://care.diabetesjournals.org>

<http://www.diabetes.org/living-with-diabetes/know-your-rights/discrimination/drivers-licenses/>