

## Useful websites

- <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/the-eatwell-guide/>

# Dietary management of Reactive Hypoglycaemia

If you need this leaflet in a different language or accessible format  
please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you.

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر یا در قالب دسترس پذیر نیاز دارید،  
لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Jeśli niniejsza ulotka ma być dostępna w innym języku lub formie,  
proszę skontaktować się z członkiem personelu, który ją dla Państwa przygotowuje.

Dacă aveți nevoie de această broșură într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil,  
vă rog să discutați cu un membru al personalului să se ocupe  
de acest lucru pentru dumneavoastră

如果您需要本传单的其他语言版本或无障碍格式，请联系工作人员为您安排。

إذا احتجت إلى هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى، أو بتنسيق  
يسهل الوصول إليه، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لترتيب ذلك لك.

Whiston Hospital  
Warrington Road,  
Prescot, Merseyside, L35 5DR  
Telephone: 0151 426 1600

St Helens Hospital  
Marshall Cross Road,  
St Helens, Merseyside, WA9 3DA  
Telephone: 01744 26633

## What is reactive hypoglycaemia?

Reactive hypoglycaemia occurs when blood glucose levels fall within a few hours after eating. For this reason it is also known as postprandial or “after eating” hypoglycaemia (hypo).

People can experience recurrent low blood glucose levels within 4 hours after eating a high carbohydrate meal.



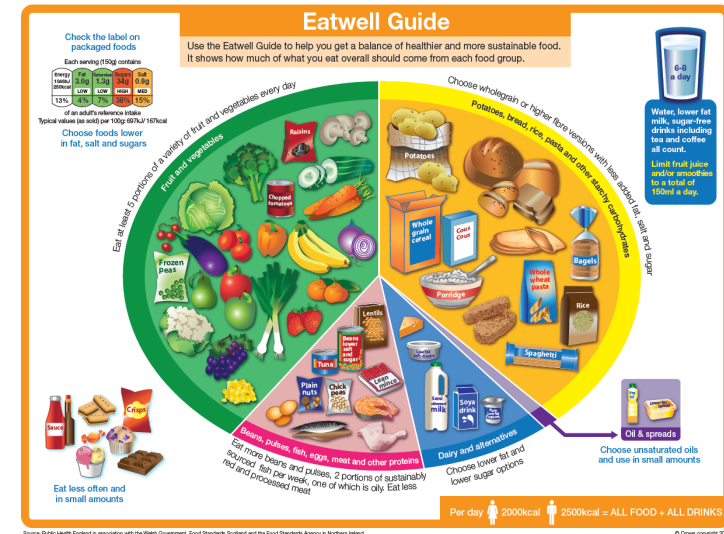
## How is Reactive Hypoglycaemia diagnosed?

A diagnosis of reactive hypoglycaemia is often clear from patients' symptoms and formal tests may not be required.

Occasionally, a 'mixed meal test' may be recommended by your doctor to see how your body reacts to carbohydrate.

This involves having your blood glucose level measured just before a 'mixed meal' and then periodically for up to 5 hours afterwards.

## The Eatwell Guide



The Eatwell Guide shows how much of what we eat should come from each food group to achieve a healthy, balanced diet.

Try to get the right balance of foods each day or week.

## Top tips for a healthy balanced diet

1. Have a least 5 fruits and/or vegetables a day
2. Opt for high fibre carbohydrates
3. Choose low-fat dairy sources
4. Choose leaner cuts of meat - or opt for fish or pulses!
5. Eat only small amounts of high sugar containing foods (cakes, biscuits, sweets, and fizzy drinks).

## Sample menu ideas

Below are examples of possible meal options to help prevent reactive hypoglycaemia.

### Breakfast ideas

- Porridge oats with small handful of blueberries and milk
- 2 medium slices of granary toast with a poached egg
- “Shredded Wheat” and a small banana

### Snack Ideas

- One piece of fruit
- Vegetable sticks with hummus or low-fat cheese spread
- 2 whole-wheat crackers with peanut butter
- A handful of unsalted nuts

### Lunch Ideas

- 2 medium slices of granary bread with a fish/meat/low fat cheese filling
- Tuna/chicken/lentil salad
- Vegetable/lentil soup with wholegrain bread

### Evening Meal Ideas

- Whole-wheat spaghetti with vegetables and low-fat mince/pulses
- Chicken/pulses curry with brown rice and vegetables
- New potatoes with steamed vegetables and fish/meat

The amount of food that you need each day depends on your age, gender, and activity level. Choose a variety of foods and eat a small snack or meal about every three hours.

## Symptoms occur within 4 hours of eating and may include:

- Anxiety
- Fast heartbeat
- Irritability
- Shaking
- Sweating
- Hunger
- Dizziness
- Blurred vision
- Confusion
- Faintness

Anxious or irritable



Trembling and shaky



Sweating



Lack of concentration



Though these symptoms are common and can be due to other conditions, a doctor should be involved in the diagnosis of reactive hypoglycaemia.

## How do I treat reactive hypoglycaemia?

The main treatment is your diet, most effectively supported by a Registered Dietitian for specific, individual advice.

A referral for this can be made by your GP or Consultant.

General advice includes:

1. Eat small but regular meals, e.g. five or six smaller meals per day, or every three hours.
2. Eat a well-balanced diet, including carbohydrates, meat, dairy, fruit and vegetables. (See the "Eatwell Guide" on the back page).
3. Choose high fibre and slowly released carbohydrate foods, (low glycaemic index\*). These can help balance your blood glucose levels.
4. Choose foods high in soluble fibre (oatmeal, oat bran and barley, dried peas, beans and lentils and vegetables and fruits with their skins).
3. Limit sweet foods e.g. sugary drinks, sweets, sugar, sweet desserts.
4. Limit sugary drinks such as soft drinks and syrups.
5. Include protein with meals and snacks, as it slows down the absorption of glucose, such as meat, poultry, eggs, fish, peas, beans and lentils, peanut butter, nuts, seeds, milk, yoghurt, cheese, and Quorn.
6. Avoid caffeine, try decaffeinated drinks instead.

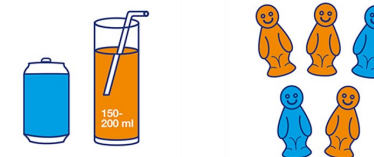
\*Examples lower glycaemic index carbohydrates:

Carbohydrate food	Lower GI choice
Bread	Multigrain, granary, rye, seeded, wholegrain, oat, pita bread and chapatti
Potatoes	New potatoes in their skins, sweet potato and yam
Pasta	All pasta, cook until <i>al dente</i> and noodles
Rice	Basmati rice, long grain and brown rice
Other grains	Bulgur wheat, barley, couscous and quinoa
Breakfast cereals	Porridge, muesli, most oat and bran-based cereals

## What to do if you experience severe symptoms

A hypo can be treated with quick-acting carbohydrate, such as:

- 200 ml Lucozade
- 150 ml Cola
- 150mls fruit juice
- 5 jelly babies
- 4 – 5 glucose tablets



But remember that the main focus of management is long term dietary changes.