

High School & Diabetes

Information for Health Professionals

Heading to High School

The following issues regarding school should be discussed with your patients before they go off to high school:

- High schools are usually a lot bigger in size than primary schools so it takes a lot longer to get around. Students are constantly on the move, usually the classes are held in different buildings. Often students end up on the other side of the campus away from their bags or locker. So it's a good idea for any student with diabetes to carry some 'hypo' food with them. To make it easier 'hypo' food can be kept in their pencil case so that they will always have something with them.
- Once patients start high school they are more likely to be travelling alone on public transport. In case of an emergency, they should always have some form of identification on them, stating that they have diabetes.

Insulin at School

All schools have different policies about students keeping medication (including insulin) and blood glucose testing equipment with them at school. You need to find out what your patients schools policy is regarding this.

Ideally, if you they are using insulin pens and taking multiple injections of insulin a day, they should keep their insulin with them at school. If they are allowed, then it's a good idea to keep the insulin pen in their pencil case along with their 'hypo' food. It is important that they do not to leave insulin in their school bag particularly if it is left in the sun as the insulin may go off.

Insulin pens/syringes/needles should be disposed of in a safe place. Some schools have 'sharps' containers in their sick rooms that they allow students to use.

Blood Glucose Testing at School

Again the school policies need to be checked to see if students can keep their testing equipment with them at school. It's a good idea to test BGLs at school before insulin is given, play sport or at anytime the student doesn't feel well. IBG testing equipment should be kept in a safe place.

Sport & Hypoglycaemia

It's a good idea to get your patients to always test their BGL before playing sport or exercising. Someone on their team, preferably the coach, should know something about diabetes and know how to treat a 'hypo'. Some 'hypo' food should be carried by the student especially if they are down on the oval or at the gym.

Visit the Sweet Transition website at www.sweet.org.au

To prevent hypo's when playing sport or exercising, one of the following should be done:

1. eat extra carbohydrate (CHO) to cover the exercise, *or*
2. reduce the dose of insulin that is working at the time of the exercise

A lot of young people exercise and play sport so they can keep in shape, so the last thing they want to do is eat a whole lot of extra CHO to avoid 'hypos'!

Exams

High school exams become really important. For students with diabetes to perform at their best they need to have good (close to normal) blood glucose levels. When the BGL is too high they will be thirsty, tired and want to go to the toilet a lot. When it is too low, they will have trouble concentrating. It is worth making the extra effort to try and get the BGL's under control before exam time starts.

Make sure they have access to 'hypo' food and your BG testing meter during exams. The school needs to know that they may have to test, eat or go to the toilet during the exam.

Special Consideration for Examinations

Each of the states in Australia have 'special provisions' for year 10 and 12 exams. This information can be found on the individual state education websites or by contacting them directly. For more information visit the education.qld.gov.au website.

Education Requirements:

Topic	Content
<i>School Issues</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• discuss differences between primary and high school• principles of managing diabetes at school, and, when appropriate school camps• discuss strategies for managing diabetes during school examinations• Discuss importance of carrying personal and diabetes identification with them at all times