

## Please remember to bring the following to every session of exercise

- A banana or cereal bar
- Bottle of water to drink before, during and after exercise
- Blood glucose monitoring kit
- Your usual hypo treatment, i.e. jelly babies, glucose gel or glucose tablets

### Glossary of terms:

Hypoglycaemia: When the blood sugar level is below 4mmol

Hyperglycaemia: When the blood sugar level is above 13mmol

Retinopathy: An eye condition which may develop in diabetic patients and may require specific treatment.

### More information

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## Information for Patients

### Diabetes and exercise



## Advice for patients with diabetes attending exercise cardiac rehabilitation classes.

This information leaflet is designed to give you advice to help you control your blood sugar levels during exercise.

- Can exercise affect my diabetes?

Regular exercise is an important area of lifestyle particularly if you have diabetes and coronary heart disease. Exercise may increase the action of your insulin, so there is a slight chance your blood sugar level may fall too low (hypoglycaemia) during or up to 4-6 hours after exercising.

You will need to check your blood sugar level before and after exercise.

If possible avoid injections into large working muscles such as the arms or legs if you are going to be using these muscles during your exercise – an alternative may be the abdomen.

If your blood sugar level is less than 4mmol or greater than 10mmol just before you exercise, it is better to correct it before you start to exercise. Please inform your rehabilitation nurse or instructor on your arrival of your blood sugar level.

- How will I know if my blood sugar level is too low?

Symptoms of hypoglycaemia may occur rapidly, so you need to pay attention to how you are feeling during and after exercise. You may feel a lack of concentration, a change in your heart beat, become sweaty, feel sick, shaky or anxious.

If you feel this way in a class you need to stop exercising and inform a member of staff who will take the appropriate action. If you are exercising away from the class you should check your sugar level and follow the guidelines of your diabetes nurse or doctor for treating a hypoglycaemic attack.

- How will I know if my blood sugar levels are too high?

You may feel more tired, have increased thirst or pass more urine. Hyperglycaemia can be associated with an illness such as bronchitis or gastroenteritis. If you are aware that your blood sugar level is above 13mmol for more than 48 hours you should see your GP or diabetes nurse.

- Footcare and diabetes.

Many people with diabetes have problems with the nerves in their feet and legs, sometimes without knowing it. It is very important that you wear well-fitted and supportive shoes. Poorly fitted shoes may result in blisters or sores which may lead to infection or other problems.

- Eyecare and diabetes

If you have developed eye problems such as advanced retinopathy you should inform the cardiac rehabilitation team before you exercise.

- Driving

Please check your blood sugar level before driving home and ensure the level is above 6mmol.