Having diabetes does not mean you need to give up driving.

However if you have diabetes and wish to drive it is important to know the law and how it affects you.

This leaflet will explain your rights and responsibilities as a driver with diabetes.

**Do you need to inform the DVLA?**

**Group 1 licence holders** (cars and motorcycles) do not need to automatically inform the DVLA if your diabetes is treated by diet alone, diet and tablets or non-insulin injections (GLP1)

You do need to inform the DVLA by law if any of the following applies:

* You need treatment with insulin.
* You suffer more than one episode of severe hypoglycaemia within the last 12 months and/or you or your medical team feels you are at high risk of developing severe hypoglycaemia. (Severe hypoglycaemia means the assistance of another person is required.)
* You develop impaired awareness of hypoglycaemia (difficulty in recognising the warning symptoms of low blood sugar).
* You suffer severe hypoglycaemia while driving.
* You have problems with vision and/or you need laser treatment to both eyes. (By law, you must be able to read with glasses or contact lenses if necessary a car number plate in good daylight at 20.5 metres (67 feet))
* You develop any problems with the circulation, or sensation in your legs or feet which makes it necessary for you to drive certain types of vehicles only, for example automatic vehicles or vehicles with a hand operated accelerator or brake.
* An existing medical condition gets worse or you develop any other condition that may affect your driving safely.

**Group 2 licence holders (Lorry/ bus)**

You do need to inform the DVLA by law if any of the following applies:

* You start treatment with tablets.
* You start treatment with insulin.
* You have one episode of severe hypoglycaemia. (Severe hypoglycaemia means the assistance of another person is required.)
* You have laser treatment to either eye.
* You have problems with vision in either eye, you also need to meet higher visual standards that apply for Group 1 licence holders
* You develop any problems with the circulation or sensation in your legs or feet which makes it necessary for you to drive certain types of vehicles only, for example, automatic vehicles, or vehicles with hand operated accelerator/brake.
* An existing medical condition gets worse or you develop any other condition that may affect you driving safely.

**How to inform the DVLA**

If you meet any of the criteria above and/ or your doctor, specialist or optician tells you to report your condition to the DVLA, you need to fill in a Medical Questionnaire about diabetes (DIAB1). You can download this from [www.direct.gov.uk/driverhealth](http://www.direct.gov.uk/driverhealth)

Tel: 0300 790 6806.

Drivers Medical Group

DVLA

Swansea

SA99 1TU

**Safe Driving Guidelines**

**Before starting a journey you need to ensure your blood glucose level is above 5mmols.**

Hypoglycaemia – also known as a ‘hypo’ – is the medical word for low blood glucose (less than 4mmols)

* If you have any signs of hypoglycaemia, stop driving and move out of the driving seat if safe to do so.
* Treat your hypo with fast acting glucose, such as glucose tablets or fruit juice recheck your blood glucose after 15mins and continue to treat with fast acting glucose until it is above 4mmols. You will then need to have a longer lasting carbohydrate snack such as a sandwich or banana.
* Only continue driving when your blood glucose has returned to the safe range for driving (above 5mmols) and has stayed above 5mmols for at least 45 minutes. It can take up to 45 mins for your brain to recover during which time your responses will be slower.
* If in any doubt, do not drive and seek medical assistance.

You should carry your blood glucose meter and test strips with you, and check your blood glucose before driving on any journey, and at frequent intervals (every 2 hours) on longer journeys.

The DVLA advises that you carry a supply of fast-acting and long acting carbohydrate within easy reach in your vehicle (for example glucose tablets or Lucozade).



**This information sheet is available to order in other languages and formats. If you would like a copy, please contact us on 01793 604031 or email** [**patient.information@gwh.nhs.uk**](mailto:patient.information@gwh.nhs.uk)

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