

Diabetes and Hot Weather - Staying Safe in the Heat

There are hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia risks in hot weather.

Whether you are going on holiday or simply spending some time outdoors in the heat, high temperatures and the close humidity currently sweeping the UK do have an influence for people with long term conditions such as diabetes.

This may partly be explained by increased activity in hot weather, but there is no doubt that the heat does affect some people with diabetes in other ways.

What problems can hot weather cause for people with diabetes?

Dehydration is a major issue in hot weather, and higher blood glucose levels can further increase this risk.

People with diabetes need to increase their intake of fluids in hot weather, drinking regularly during the day and focusing on drinking water.

One of the major concerns regarding diabetes and hot weather is the risk of blood sugar levels rising or falling and causing hypoglycemia or hyperglycemia.

What are the hypo risks from hot weather?

Hot weather can increase the risk of hypoglycemia for those on blood glucose lowering medication.

The Joslin Diabetes Centre notes that the body's metabolism is higher in hot and humid weather which can lead to an increased chance of hypoglycemia.

Hypos may be slightly harder to spot in hot weather.

Don't be tempted to disregard hypo symptoms, such as sweating and tiredness, as a result of hot weather as it could be a sign of hypoglycemia.

Take extra care when driving and test your blood sugar before and after each journey and stop regularly to check your blood sugar if taking longer journeys.

To prevent hypos, be prepared to test your blood glucose more often, particularly if taking part in physical activity in hot weather.

Keep a source of fasting carbohydrate, such as glucose tablets, to hand.

To help treat hypos, buy glucose products from the Diabetes Shop.

You may need to adjust your insulin levels during changes in temperature. If you are experiencing higher or lower blood sugar levels and need advice about adjusting your insulin levels, speak with a member of your healthcare team.

What are the symptoms of heat exhaustion?

Heat exhaustion is higher risk for people with diabetes.

Symptoms of heat exhaustion include:

- Sweating more than usual
- Dizziness
- Cramping muscles
- Clammy skin
- Headaches
- Fast heartbeat and
- Nausea.

By resting and drinking more water you can avoid heat stroke, which is considered a medical emergency.

What about hot weather and medicine?

When carrying diabetes supplies which need to be kept cool, such as insulin, the heat of summer can be a problem.

Get around this by keeping your medication away from direct sunlight and carrying cooling packs, which keep medication cool.

- [View our range of cooling wallets](#)

[Blood testing in hot weather](#)

Test strips are sensitive to temperature as well. Test your blood sugar in a cool, shaded place and keep your test strips away from direct sunlight as well.

- [Read more on blood testing accuracy](#)

With good preparation, there is no reason why hot weather can't be a real pleasure!

[What the community are saying about diabetes and hot weather](#)

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