

## HYPOGLYCAEMIA

Today's Western diet loads the body with excess refined sugar and grains. Refining these foods strips them of the nutrients and enzymes necessary for their digestion and metabolism.

From the food we eat, sugar (glucose) is converted into glycogen, which is stored in the liver and muscles. The pancreas secretes insulin to enable this conversion.

Most of us consume far too much sugar, which puts an undue strain on our pancreas, which releases large amounts of insulin into the blood in an attempt to lower blood sugar to normal levels. In hypoglycaemia, the pancreas over reacts by secreting too much insulin into the blood, causing too rapid a decline in blood sugar and a glucose deficit.

The brain depends on glucose as its only source of fuel. Therefore, the first signs of low blood sugar appear in brain function: headaches, drowsiness, mood swings, poor concentration, irritability, or hyperactivity. You may also feel light-headed and fatigued. These symptoms often trigger a sugar craving for you to raise your brain's glucose level. However, consuming more sugar or starchy foods only begins the cycle again.

Exhaustion of the pancreas may follow too frequent release of insulin for reducing high levels of sugar, and hypoglycaemia often develops into diabetes.

Stress and nutrient deficiencies also contribute to the progression of hypoglycaemia. Stress can cause over-stimulation of the adrenal glands that produce adrenalin which itself stimulates the breakdown of glycogen in the liver to increase blood sugar levels. Nutrient deficiencies cause imbalances in metabolism.

Controlling blood sugar is all about eating the right foods. Foods such as wholemeal pasta, oats, beans, lentils, peas take longer to be broken down and release their sugars more slowly. Eat good quality protein such as chicken, eggs, fish, pulses, and yoghurt. These don't put a strain on insulin production and help sustain the appetite for longer periods. Eating these sorts of foods earlier in the day helps us to stay energised and alert. Starchy foods are best eaten later in the day, as they are more soporific. Fibre-rich foods such as brown rice, oat bran, pulses, seeds, vegetables make you feel fuller for longer and help control blood glucose levels.

People who diet a lot are at risk of developing hypoglycaemia, as are people who regularly skip meals. Certain prescribed medications can affect blood sugar balance in susceptible individuals.

### FOODS TO AVOID

Foods containing white flour - breads, cakes, biscuits, pasta.

All Sugars - including honey, molasses, sucrose, dextrose, fructose, cane juice, corn syrup etc...

Processed and fatty foods.

Alcohol

Tobacco

Tea & Coffee (caffeine)

Fizzy drinks

Fruit juices unless diluted with water

Fruit initially

Vinegar

MSG stimulates the glutamate receptors in the pancreas, increasing insulin release and leading to low blood sugar

Excessive salt

## SUPPLEMENTATION

Brewer's Yeast - stabilizes blood sugar levels

Chromium - glucose metabolism

Garlic - relieves low blood sugar during an attack

Vitamin B complex - carbohydrate and protein metabolism. Helps body tolerate foods which cause low blood sugar.

Zinc - Proper release of insulin.

Magnesium - Carbohydrate metabolism.

Vitamin E - Improves energy and circulation.

For more information on the glycaemic index:

**<http://www.mendosa.com/gi.htm>**

**<http://www.glycemicindex.com>**