

How can I help reduce healthcare associated infections?

Infection control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. We ask that you, and anyone visiting you, use the hand sanitiser available at the entrance to every ward before coming in to or after leaving the ward. In some situations hands may need to be washed at the sink using soap and water rather than using the hand sanitiser. Staff will let you know if this is the case.

www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk

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Drugs and Diabetes

Patient information leaflet

For Parents & Carers of a child with Diabetes

Safe & compassionate care,

every time

Many young people feel tempted to try illegal drugs at some time or another.

However, they can cause serious health damage and even death. There are also heavy penalties for possessing or supplying them.

Drug use is not recommended for anyone – whether they have diabetes or not. **However, for people with diabetes, there are huge additional risks you should be aware of.** Hopefully, you will never be tempted to use illegal drugs but, if you are, try to stay as safe as possible.

For further information, see the Diabetes UK website at www.diabetes.org.uk or log on to www.talktofrank.com

Getting Help

If you are worried about your drug use or that of a friend or relation, speak to a member of the diabetes team or contact the **Buckinghamshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT)**.

DAAT has a confidential service for the under 18s called Young Addiction.

See the website: <http://www.bucksdaat.co.uk/>

DAAT contact details:

The Buckinghamshire 24/7 Helpline can be contacted by calling **0800 032 0666**.

Ketamine (K, Green, Donkey dust)

All users risk unconsciousness, hallucinations and high blood pressure. If you have diabetes there is extra risk as ketamine increases blood glucose levels and also can cause metabolic acidosis (which is similar to Diabetic Ketoacidosis). The risk of serious acidosis can be reduced by making sure that you do **not** forget any insulin.

Opiates e.g. Heroin (also known as smack, H, gear, brown, skag, horse), Codeine

Opiates are highly addictive. They are 'downers', meaning they slow down the body's thought processes, heart rate and breathing. Vomiting can occur (particularly after the first dose), so hypoglycaemia could be a risk. The relaxing effect might mean you forget about or cannot be bothered with taking your insulin, doing blood tests or eating properly. As a result, there is an increased risk of poor glucose control - both hypoglycaemia and high glucose levels/ketoacidosis. If you inject, you run the risk of skin infections that won't heal properly, especially if your diabetes is not well controlled.

Staying safer

- **Remember** - no drug is a safe drug.
- There are risks associated with any drug you take.
- Have some diabetes I.D. on you (such as a MedicAlert bracelet) and make sure your friends know about your diabetes. If you are unconscious, someone needs to call an ambulance and **not** just assume you are drunk or high on drugs.
- Always carry fast-acting glucose with you (such as glucose tablets).
- Have regular soft drinks and water, especially if you are clubbing.
- Have some carbohydrate based food **before** you go out.
- You might also need to snack during the evening and eat a bedtime snack (without insulin) if you have taken uppers or alcohol.
- NEVER mix alcoholic drink and drugs.
- Don't forget your long acting insulin (e.g. Lantus). Forgetting insulin puts you at high risk of Diabetic Ketoacidosis and unconsciousness.
- Check your blood glucose **regularly** and **before** going to sleep. (Drugs can interfere with your ability to recognise hypo symptoms.)
- Check your blood glucose the following morning and give a correction dose of insulin if your glucose level is high.

Illegal drugs fall into 5 main categories: Note so-called “**Legal Highs**” can fall into any of these categories and can be **very** dangerous. Their effects are less well researched and may not be predictable.

Cannabis (weed, hash)

This is the most commonly used illegal drug. Users feel ‘spaced out’ and have impaired judgement. This means that you may forget to eat or take your insulin properly. You may not recognise a hypo or not be bothered to treat it. Cannabis can increase appetite (the munchies), causing blood glucose levels to rise if you don’t give extra insulin. Cannabis can also cause a “whitey”. This is a when users feel lightheaded and sick and is more common if combined with alcohol.

Hallucinogens e.g. LSD (acid), Magic mushrooms

Hallucinogens can make you feel ‘spaced out’ and impair your judgement. You might forget to take your insulin or eat normally. You might not recognise your hypos or ignore treating them.

Uppers (Stimulants) e.g. Ecstasy, Cocaine (snow), Amphetamine (speed, whizz)

‘Uppers’ increase your metabolic rate. Users experience a temporary high and increased energy. Body temperature goes up and, if you’re dancing continuously, you can become dehydrated. They also increase your risk of hypos. This is because of the increased metabolic rate, increased exercise levels (such as prolonged dancing) and also because they reduce your appetite, so you may eat less than usual.

Risks are reduced by:

- Eating a meal rich in long acting carbohydrates (and taking your insulin as usual) before starting.
 - You should also eat regular carbohydrate containing snacks (without insulin)
 - Drink a pint of non-alcoholic, sugar-free drink each hour. (Do not drink more than this if using Ecstasy, as there is a risk of fluid overload.)
 - Before you go to bed make sure you check your blood glucose and eat a carbohydrate snack (without insulin).
- Once the high wears off, users experience ‘come down’ and feel depressed, irritable and tired. Some people sleep for long periods and risk missing their usual insulin injections. The symptoms can last several days and cause difficulty concentrating at school or work. You might also feel less motivated to look after your diabetes properly.