

FAQ: Alcohol and Type 1 Diabetes

Alcohol increases the risk of hypoglycaemia in people with type 1 diabetes. It reduces the liver's glucose release and can impair memory and judgement. This guide summarises the [FAQ](#), and [Partying with T1D Guide](#) developed by John Pemberton and Dr Dessi Zaharieva to help plan and prepare without judgement! The [Alcohol and T1D podcast episode](#) explains all!



Alcohol's Impact on the Liver

1 unit alcohol \approx 1 hour reduced liver glucose output = 1 hour of hypo risk

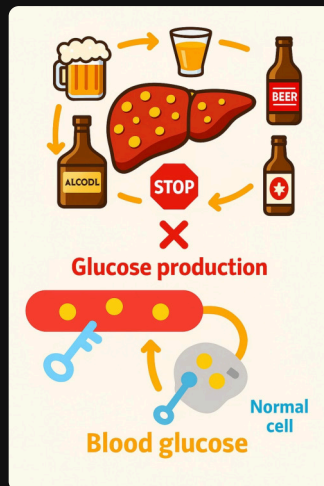
Glucose Release

Reduced glucose output as stores run out

Slows new glucose being made from fats/proteins

Limited help for hypos

Lasts according to units of alcohol consumed



Glucagon

Glucagon injection becomes unreliable. If unresponsive during a hypo.

FIRST, call an ambulance!

Then second, try the Glucagon injection, but please don't rely on it!



Before Drinking

- MDI/Pump/AID: reduce basal insulin or Activity mode (next page)
- Meal (carb/fat/protein) slows alcohol effects
- Plan drinks: carbs or not
- Set up CGM sharing



During

- Aim for 7.0-10.0 mmol/L or 126-200 mg/dL
- 10-15g carbs = 3 mmol/L or 60 mg/dL increase
- CGM low alert : 5.6 mmol/L or 100 mg/dL
- Carry hypo treatment



After

- Get to 10.0 mmol/L or 180 mg/dL before bed
- Small snack (10-30g) with no insulin
- For meals of >30g, small insulin dose (next page)
- Hypo supplies by bed

Safety, Strategy & Troubleshooting

Insulin Adjustments (>4 Units Alcohol)

MDI (Multiple Daily Injections)

Long-acting: Reduce by 25-75% depending on drinking duration and intensity

Bolus: For carb-containing drinks and food, use 0-50% of usual bolus dose. Start low and go slow

Insulin Pump

Temp basal: Set reduction of -25% to -75% before drinking begins until the morning.

Bolus: For carb-containing drinks and food, use 0-50% of usual bolus dose. Start low and go slow

AID Systems (Automated Insulin Delivery)

Activity Mode: Turn on before drinking and keep active overnight

Caution: If your AID system causes hypos, even in Activity Mode, try manual mode with 50% usual basal

Switching back to Injections for Partying

Start with 50% of your usual basal dose. Carry a rapid-acting pen. Temp basal when reconnecting to pump until basal injection finishes

Core Safety Pillars



CGM | Phone

Followers | Charged



Hypo Plan

Prevent | Treat



Medical ID

Phone | Body | Card

Troubleshooting Guide

Issue	First Steps	Consider next time
Low overnight	Treat, and get above 7.0 mmol/L (126 mg/dL)	Larger basal cut (MDI or Insulin pump). If AID, could try manual mode with 50% basal reduction
Severe hypo	Ambulance 1st, Glucagon 2nd	Re-evaluate plans
High but dropping	No correction	If AID causing drop, consider Manual mode with 50% basal