MANAGING HI IN SCHOOLS

HOW DO WE EXPLAIN HYPERINSULINISM TO SCHOOLS?

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Managing HI in schools
How do we explain Hyperinsulinism to schools?

http://www.gosh.nhs.uk/medical-conditions/clinical-specialties/endocrinology-information-for-parents-and-visitors/conditions-we-treat/congenital-hyperinsulinism/video
**What is Congenital Hyperinsulinism?**

- Congenital means something that you were born with.
- Hyper means too much.
- Insulin is a hormone (chemical messenger).

Congenital Hyperinsulinism means that there is too much insulin in your body. Because it is such a long word some of the doctors and nurses shorten it to CHI, so let's do the same.

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**What is Insulin?**

Insulin is a special hormone. A hormone is a chemical messenger that travels around your body and tells it how to work.

Insulin is released by our pancreas. The pancreas is a gland (a special type of organ) that hides behind our stomach. The pancreas also helps us break down and digest the food that we eat.

If our blood sugar levels are too high (often after eating, especially food with lots of sugar) our pancreas should release insulin to tell our body to lower the amount of sugar in our blood. This is to make the blood sugar level just right.
What happens in Congenital Hyperinsulinism (CHI)?

Unfortunately in CHI your pancreas makes and releases insulin continuously even when it does not need to. This can make your blood sugar levels go too low, which can be dangerous if not treated quickly. The doctors and nurses call this hypoglycaemia.

- 'Hypo' means too low
- 'Glycaemia' means glucose (or sugar) in the blood

So, hypoglycaemia means 'low blood sugars'

Both our brain and body need just the right amount of sugar to keep healthy. Not too little, not too much.

Our brain especially needs sugar to keep it working. Sugar is like the fuel for the brain. It gives us 'brain power' and helps us think and learn new things. If our blood sugar levels are too low, our brain will not work very well.

It is important to keep your blood sugar level above 3.5 mmol/l at all times to make sure your brain gets all the fuel it needs.
How do I know if my blood sugar levels are okay?

You should have a blood glucose monitor which measures the amount of sugar in your blood. This is done by a small prick, usually on your finger, that will give a single drop of blood to put on a strip. Check the number on the monitor to see if your blood sugar levels are just right!

Some children notice they don’t feel right when their blood sugar levels start to go too low. Tick the changes that happen in your body. They are different for everybody.

If you have any of these symptoms you can use your monitor to double check. If the monitor says under 3.5 get a grown up to help you straight away. The grown up will give you something sugary to eat or drink.

**Warning:** Sometimes when your blood sugar levels go too low (under 3.5 mmol/l), your brain can stop working properly and you may not notice that things are wrong!

Sometimes it is important to test your blood sugar levels regularly to make sure they are okay. Write in the box when or how often the doctor or nurse tells you that you should check your blood sugar levels.

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My Symptoms of Low Blood Sugar Levels are:

- [ ] Feeling tired or sleepy
- [ ] Feeling wobbly or shaky
- [ ] Feeling dizzy
- [ ] Feeling hungry
- [ ] Feeling grumpy or angry
- [ ] Having a headache
- [ ] Other ____________________________
- [ ] Other ____________________________
- [ ] Other ____________________________
- [ ] Other ____________________________

I need to check my Blood Sugar Levels
Potential issues identified at school age

- Transition of care: Starting Primary School
  - Practical needs
  - Anxiety
- Funding
- School care plan
Problems encountered

- Administration of medication
- School requesting collection of child
- School’s concern regarding risk
- Pros and cons of one-to-one care
Cognitive issues for school age children

- Some children with HI do present with Attention Problems
  - Sustained attention
  - Divided attention

- Ensure teacher is aware of child’s cognitive strengths and weaknesses
Helpful strategies for attention difficulties

- Present information in short, concise format
- Ensure you have the child’s attention (eye contact) and that they have understood
- Reduce clutter on their work space
- Repeat information
Helpful strategies for attention difficulties 2

- External motivation
  - prompts for child to stay on task, and gently bring them back to task
  - praise if they stay on task.
Helpful strategies for attention difficulties 3

- Setting small achievable goals of staying on task for short periods
- Allow for the child to have frequent breaks
- Allow sufficient time between tasks
- Allow child to focus on one task at a time
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

- No current research to show if children with HI are more likely to have ADHD than the general population.
- One of the main treatment for ADHD are Behavioural Parenting strategies. These can be used by everyone!
- Medication is occasionally prescribed
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