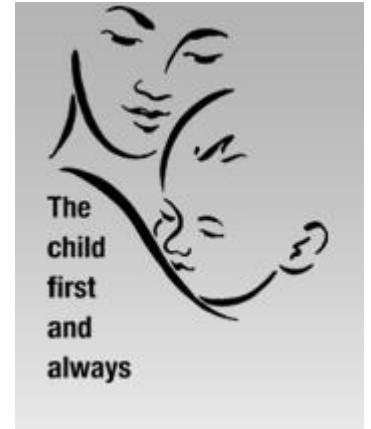


# MANAGING HI IN SCHOOLS

HOW DO WE EXPLAIN  
HYPERINSULINISM TO SCHOOLS?



Clare Gilbert

# Managing HI in schools

## How do we explain Hyperinsulinism to schools?

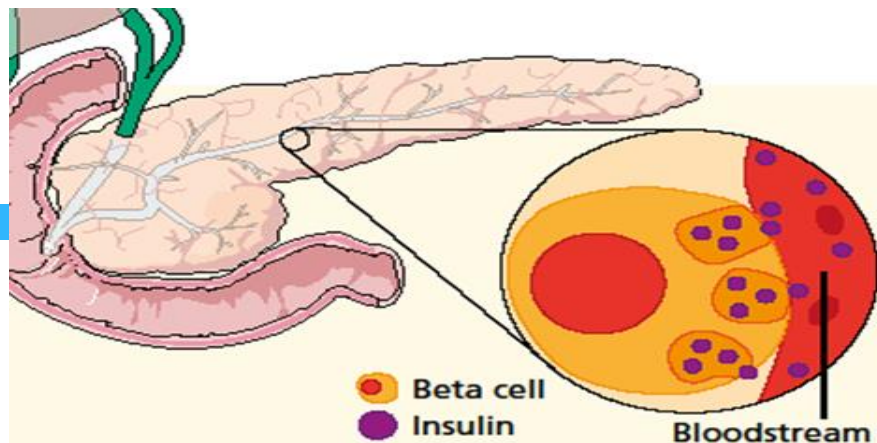
- <http://www.gosh.nhs.uk/medical-conditions/clinical-specialties/endocrinology-information-for-parents-and-visitors/conditions-we-treat/congenital-hyperinsulinism/video>



# Congenital Hyperinsulinism



Information for children & young people



### What is Congenital Hyperinsulinism?

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

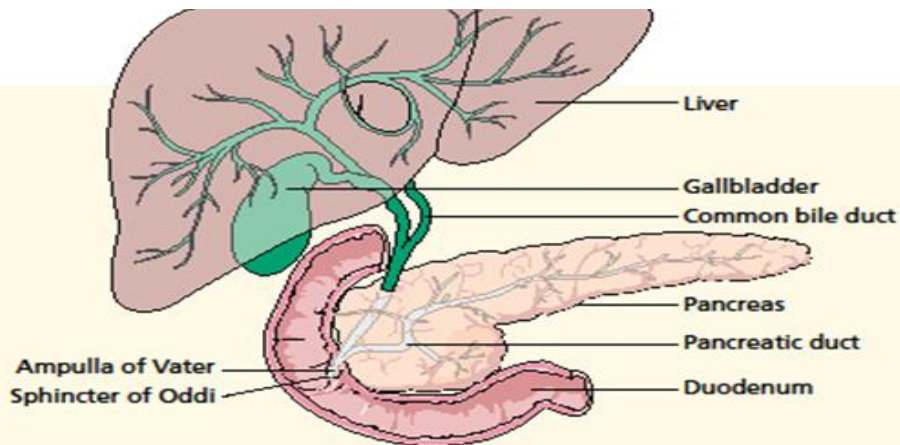
Congenital Hyperinsulinism means that there is too much insulin in your body. Because it is such a long word some of the doctors and nurses shorten it to CHI, so let's do the same.

### 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 [pic] 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.

### 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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.

### I need to check my Blood Sugar Levels

Notes

If you have any other questions or want to learn more about your CHI,  
you can call the Clinical Nurse Specialist in Hypoglycaemia  
at Great Ormond Street Hospital 020 7405 9200 on extension 0360

© GOSH Trust January 2012  
Ref. 2011C0139  
Compiled by the Congenital  
Hyperinsulinism team in  
collaboration with the Child and  
Family Information Group

Great Ormond Street Hospital  
for Children NHS Trust,  
Great Ormond Street,  
London WC1N 3JH  
Tel: 020 7405 9200  
[www.gosh.nhs.uk](http://www.gosh.nhs.uk)

Information for children & young people

# 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 1

- 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

Special thanks to Jemima Bullock:  
Clinical Psychologist GOSH