

Diabetes and Driving



The Diabetes, Endocrine & Metabolism Centre offers one-stop accessible care to patients and is staffed by experienced endocrinologists, diabetes nurse educators, podiatrists and dietitians to manage patients' diabetes, thyroid problems, obesity and other related disorders. Patients with lipid, calcium and bone disorders, pituitary disorders, adrenal disorders and endocrine hypertension can approach us to find out more.

How does diabetes affect driving?

If your diabetes is well-controlled and your doctor states that you are safe to drive, you do not have to give up driving. However, you do have to plan ahead and take precautions for safe driving.

Both high and low blood glucose (sugar) can affect your ability to drive safely. When you have high blood glucose, you may feel tired and unwell. Your vision may also be affected. When you have low blood sugar, you may have poor concentration and attention. You may even lose consciousness.

You should not drive if you:

- Have had 2 episodes of severe hypoglycaemia (low blood glucose) in the past 12 months
- Have hypoglycaemia unawareness (where you have difficulty recognising the early signs of low blood glucose)
- Have experienced a hypoglycaemia episode whilst driving
- Have problems with your vision which is not correctable with glasses
- Have numbness or weakness in your limbs
- Have taken alcohol or medication that can cause drowsiness



How do I drive safely?

- Check with your doctor if you are fit to drive
- Inform your doctor if you have had low blood glucose
- Carry some form of identification and your Medik Awas card in case of emergency
- Be prepared for unexpected delays and traffic jams
- Always have non-sugar free snacks in your car for rescue in case of hypoglycaemia, e.g. cereal bars, biscuits, sweets and sugary drinks
- Do not delay meals
- Do not drive for more than 2 hours without eating a snack
- Check your blood sugar within 2 hours before driving and every 2 hours whilst driving
- Do not drive if your blood sugar is 5 mmol/L or less. Follow the steps below in the next section
- Do not leave your blood glucose meter in the car as it may be damaged by extreme temperatures



How to treat low blood sugar when driving?

- Symptoms of low blood sugar are: hunger, sweating, giddiness, shaking, headache, feeling weak, and having fast heartbeat
- Stop your car at a safe place as soon as you can
- Switch off the engine, remove the ignition key and move to the passenger seat
- Take 15 grams of fast-acting carbohydrate, e.g. 3 sweets, glucose tablets or a sugary drink
- Check your blood sugar again 15 minutes later and then every 15 minutes
- Take some slow-acting carbohydrate, e.g. biscuits or cereal bar
- Do not start driving again until 45 minutes after your blood sugar has risen above 5 mmol/L
- Get help if your blood sugar does not return to normal after 30 minutes

References:

- Joslin Diabetes Centre. (2018) In the Driver's Seat: Managing Hypoglycemia When Driving. Retrieved from: http://www.joslin.org/info/In_the_Drivers_Seat_Managing_Hypoglycemia_When_Driving%20.html
- Diabetes UK. (2017) Driving and diabetes. Retrieved from: <https://www.diabetes.org.uk/guide-to-diabetes/life-with-diabetes/driving>
- Diabetes.co.uk. (2018) Driving with diabetes. Retrieved from: <https://www.diabetes.co.uk/driving-with-diabetes.html>
- Diabetes.co.uk. (2018) Driving and Hypoglycemia. Retrieved from: <https://www.diabetes.co.uk/driving-and-hypoglycaemia.html>

For more information

Ng Teng Fong General Hospital and Jurong Community Hospital

1 Jurong East St 21, Singapore 609606

www.ntfgh.com.sg | www.jch.com.sg

Clinic opening hours

Monday – Friday: 8.30am – 5.30pm

Saturday: 8.30am – 12.30pm (Selected clinics only*)

Dental Clinic: Monday – Thursday: 8.00am – 5.30pm, Friday: 8.00am – 5.00pm

*Please refer to our websites for more details.

General enquiries & appointments

General enquiries line: 6908 2222 (24-hr)

Fax: 6716 5500 | Email: contactus@nuhs.edu.sg

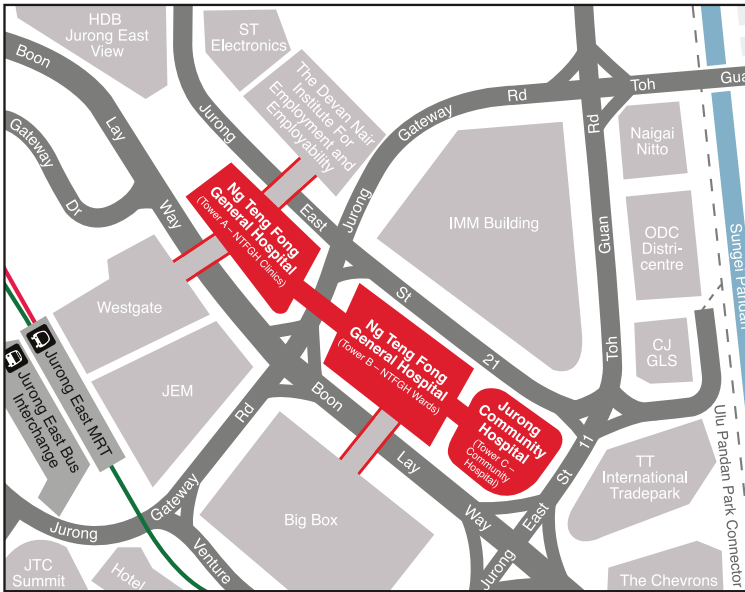
Appointment line: 6908 2222 (Monday – Friday: 8.00am – 5.30pm, Saturday: 8.00am – 12.30pm)

Fax: 6716 2200 | Email: appointment@nuhs.edu.sg

Dental appointment line: 6716 2233 (Monday – Friday: 8.00am – 5.30pm)

Fax: 6716 2200 | Email: JHCampus_Dental@nuhs.edu.sg

Getting there



By train

Alight at Jurong East MRT Station

By bus

Jurong East Bus Interchange

41, 49, 51, 52, 66, 66B, 78, 78A, 79, 79A, 97, 97E, 98, 98M, 105, 143, 143M, 160, 160A, 160M, 183, 183B, 197, 333, 334, 335, 506

Along Boon Lay Way

49, 99, 333, Private bus service 625, 990

Disclaimer:

The information in this brochure is meant for educational purposes and should not be used as a substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. Please seek your doctor's advice before starting any treatment or if you have any questions related to your health, physical fitness or medical condition. Information is accurate at the time of printing.