

Special Needs information leaflet: Diabetes mellitus

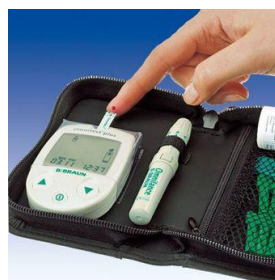
1 Studying with diabetes mellitus

Diabetes mellitus is a chronic metabolic disorder which manifests itself in an increased blood glucose level. This is caused by an absolute shortage of insulin (diabetes mellitus type 1) or by a reduced effect (relative shortage) of insulin (diabetes mellitus type 2). Insulin is a hormone that is produced by the beta cells in the pancreas and plays the most important role in the regulation of the blood sugar level. Insulin acts like a key which ensures that the cells open to receive glucose. In the cells, glucose is converted into energy for the body. The treatment of diabetes mellitus type 1 consists in replacing the lacking insulin. The required dosage depends on the current blood glucose level, the amount of ingested carbohydrates and planned activities.

In non-diabetics, the blood glucose level hardly ever sinks below 60 mg/dl (3.3 mmol/l) and rises to no more than 140 mg/dl (7.8 mmol/l) after a meal. In diabetics, there are no upper and lower limits: in cases of extreme hypoglycemia, the blood sugar level can sink below 20 mg/dl (1.1 mmol/l), and in a diabetic coma it can rise up to around 1,000 mg/dl (55.5 mmol/l) – both life-threatening levels which must be avoided.

2 Possible effects

- Too high, too low: sometimes diabetics' blood sugar levels seem to be on a roller-coaster. Particularly in stress situations, setting the blood glucose level is a great challenge and requires regular blood sugar measurements – before, after and even during examinations.
- For this reason, faculty members are called upon to respect diabetic students' equipment (blood glucose meter, pen, food, etc.).
- The persons concerned will be notified in writing of any adaptations to examination situations after consultation. The procedure is described on the Special Needs website: www.unisg.ch/de/universitaet/hsgservices/beratung/beratungsstellen/special+needs/nachteilsausgleich
- **Please note: blood glucose meters must be left with the students concerned at all times.** Diabetes measuring instruments are unable to access the internet, and the values measured can be evaluated externally (hospital, GP) if required.



3 Contact

If you have any questions and concerns, please contact the Special Needs Advice Center:
Special Needs Advice Center; specialneeds@unisg.ch; +41 71 224 31 91
or: nachteilsausgleich@unisg.ch; +41 71 224 22 23.