



Important messages about diabetes for taxi drivers from south Asian communities

1. You have an increased risk of getting diabetes as a person of south Asian background.

2. Eating less and moving more can make a real difference to your health, and diabetes may be prevented or delayed.

3. Symptoms include the following, all of which interfere with your life and your work, therefore it is essential to detect and treat diabetes:

- feeling tired, particularly after eating
- being thirsty
- blurry vision
- not being able to get over infections.

4. People with diabetes often have high blood pressure, high cholesterol and too much fat in their blood, all of which increase risk of heart attack, stroke, amputation of a limb, blindness and kidney damage.

5. If you have diabetes and it is not well managed, you could have a heart attack and die up to 10 years younger than others in your age group. It is very important that you attend your planned diabetes reviews with doctors and nurses who work with you to reduce your risk.

6. Smoking increases the heart damage caused by diabetes, so if you smoke it is important to get support to stop.

7. Diabetes can affect your job as a taxi driver if you do not manage it well, for example low blood sugar can make you feel dizzy and cause unconsciousness (blackout).

You need to know about low blood sugar (hypoglycaemia):

- Metformin is safe when driving
- Other tablets and insulin may cause low blood sugar, which can lead to accidents by affecting your judgement or causing a blackout. You must:
 - avoid delaying or missing meals
 - take breaks
 - always keep hypo treatments in the car, so that if you have a hypo while driving you can stop, switch off the engine, take the key out of the ignition, move out of the driver's seat, take a quick-acting carbohydrate like a sweet or glucose tablet and some form of longer-acting carbohydrate, and wait 45 minutes after blood glucose has got back to normal before driving again.
- The DVLA must be informed if you are on insulin or have had hypoglycaemia when driving - check the regulations (see Diabetes UK website: www.diabetes.org.uk)
- If you are on insulin, check your blood glucose no more than two hours before you get behind the wheel and then every two hours while driving
- The DVLA advises that if blood glucose is 5mmol/l or less you should take carbohydrates before driving
- If blood glucose is less than 4mmol/l do not drive.

Look after yourself, keep your job and enjoy your life!