

Drivers with Diabetes and Hypoglycemia Class 1–4 Licences

Fact Sheet

Under the Motor Vehicle Act, the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles has the responsibility for determining the fitness to drive of people who hold or are applying for a British Columbia driver's licence. Drivers who have a medical condition that has the potential to affect their fitness to drive may be required to have their doctor complete a Driver's Medical Examination Report (DMER). This report will provide the Superintendent with the information needed to decide whether someone is fit and able to drive safely. The form is mailed to the driver from RoadSafetyBC.

This fact sheet outlines the procedures RoadSafetyBC follows to collect information about the severity, progression, treatment or effects of diabetes with respect to a person's fitness to drive. In many cases, diabetes does not have an impact on an individual's ability to drive. Because diabetes affects people differently, the information RoadSafetyBC requests allows an assessment to be carried out on an individual basis.

How Diabetes Can Affect Driver Fitness

Diabetes is a progressive condition that can affect a person's fitness to drive. Insulin and oral medications used to treat diabetes can cause low blood sugar which may result in a sudden loss of consciousness or alteration of consciousness. As well, the long-term complications of diabetes may result in vision changes, heart disease, nervous system disease, and others — all of which can affect driving fitness.

Requirements, Depending on Type of Diabetes

The type and frequency of assessment and follow up by RoadSafetyBC varies depending on the class of driver's licence held or applied for, as well as the type and control of diabetes.

Type 2 Diabetes – not treated with insulin or insulin secretagogues

[i.e. treated with diet/exercise or in combination with

diabetes medication]

Under the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles' policy, you are required to have a DMER completed by your doctor and submitted to RoadSafetyBC when you have Type 2 Diabetes that is not treated with insulin or insulin secretagogues.

You will be found fit to drive at the class of driver's licence you hold or have applied for if your doctor indicates that you maintain good control of your diabetes.

To ensure you remain fit to drive you must:

- report to RoadSafetyBC if you begin insulin therapy
- remain under regular medical supervision to ensure that any progression in your condition or development of chronic complications does not go unattended.

Because diabetes is a progressive condition, RoadSafetyBC will reassess your fitness to drive every five years, or in accordance with the schedule for routine reassessment of professional drivers. RoadSafetyBC will also reassess your fitness to drive if you have insulin or insulin secretagogue therapy initiated.

Type 2 diabetes – treated with insulin secretagogues

Under the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles' policy, you are required to have a DMER completed by your doctor and submitted to RoadSafetyBC when you have diabetes treated with insulin secretagogues.

You will be found fit to drive at the class of driver's licence you hold or have applied for if your doctor indicates that:

- you have a good understanding of your diabetic condition.
- you routinely follow your physician's instructions about diet, medication, glucose monitoring and the prevention of hypoglycemia.

To ensure you to remain fit drive you must:

- report to RoadSafetyBC if you begin insulin therapy
- report to RoadSafetyBC and your physician if you have an episode of severe hypoglycemia
- remain under regular medical supervision to ensure that any progression in your condition or development of chronic complications does not go unattended
- stop driving and treat yourself immediately if hypoglycemia is identified or suspected
- do not drive until at least 45 minutes after effective treatment if your blood glucose is between 2.5 and 4.0 mmol/L.

RoadSafetyBC will reassess your fitness to drive annually. and will also reassess if you initiate insulin therapy.

Diabetes – treated with insulin (Type 1 or 2)

Professional drivers who operate heavy vehicles over distances, work long and irregular hours, work in bad weather, carry passengers, or perform unexpected heavy physical labour can have difficulty maintaining the essential balance between insulin dose, food intake and physical exertion due to the nature of their work. In addition, due to their type of work, these drivers are often unable to stop work if they become ill while on duty, even though an acute illness can make it very difficult for them to keep their diabetic condition under proper control. Professional drivers have meal times that may frequently be delayed and on occasion, may be skipped altogether.

Under the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles' policy, you may be required to have a "Diabetic Package" completed and submitted to RoadSafetyBC when you have Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes treated with insulin:

- [Driver's Medical Examination Report \(DMER\)](#) form - to be completed by your doctor
- [Diabetic Driver Report](#) - to be completed by your doctor
- [Driver's Diabetes Questionnaire](#) form - to be completed by you
- [Examination of Visual Function](#) form - to be completed by your ophthalmologist or optometrist.

(Note: If you have had a complete vision examination in the past year with your vision specialist including

information about your visual fields, you may submit a copy of this report instead of the form that was sent to you).

All forms in the "Diabetic Package" must be completed and forwarded together to RoadSafetyBC within 60 days of the date the DMER was issued (you will find this date at the top of the DMER form). Please note that RoadSafetyBC cannot review the information if any documents are incomplete or missing.

When you see your physician, you must make available:

- records of medical care for the previous 24 months for initial assessment and 12 months for reassessment, and
- a log of blood glucose measurements performed at least twice daily for the previous six months or since diagnosis if diagnosed less than six months previous.

You will be found fit for the class of driver's licence you have applied for or hold, if your doctor indicates that:

- you have obtained and retained an initial certificate of competency in blood glucose management from an approved diabetic clinic
- he or she has approved your work schedule as compatible with your insulin regimen
- your blood tests do not indicate uncontrolled diabetes. Indicators of uncontrolled diabetes are:
 - HbA1C > 12%
 - > 10% of BG levels < 4.0 mmol/L
- you have had no significant change in type of insulin therapy or number of injections or, if there has been a significant change in insulin therapy, monitoring and assessment indicate a stable and effective glucose control
- you present with no evidence of inadequate self-monitoring of blood glucose (unreliable or no home blood glucose measurement) or inadequate knowledge of the causes, symptoms and treatment of hypoglycemic reaction

To ensure that you remain fit to drive you must:

- carry the following supplies whenever you are driving:
- blood glucose self-monitoring equipment
- a source of readily available, rapidly absorbable



glucose

- test your blood glucose concentration one hour or less before driving and approximately every four hours while driving
- not begin or continue to drive if your glucose level falls below 6.0 mmol/L (108mg/dL) and you must not resume driving until your glucose level has risen to 6.0 mmol/L or higher following food ingestion.

RoadSafetyBC will reassess your fitness to drive annually.

Drivers who have had an episode of severe hypoglycemia

Under the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles' policy, you are required to have a DMER completed by your doctor and submitted to RoadSafetyBC when you have had an episode of severe hypoglycemia.

You will be found fit to drive for the class of driver's licence you hold or have applied for if your doctor indicates that:

- you have provided your treating physician with a blood glucose log of at least four readings per day for 30 days, in which less than 5% of the readings are below 4.0 mmol/L
- you have re-established stable glycemic control.

To ensure that you remain fit to drive you must:

- report to RoadSafetyBC and your physician if you have an episode of severe hypoglycemia
- for the next six months, test your blood glucose concentration immediately before driving and approximately every hour while driving
- for the next six months, not drive or you must stop driving when your blood glucose falls below 6.0 mmol/L and do not resume driving until your blood glucose level has risen above 6.0 mmol/L after food ingestion.

RoadSafetyBC will reassess your fitness to drive annually.

Drivers who have hypoglycemia unawareness

Under the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles' policy, you are required to have a DMER completed by your doctor and submitted to RoadSafetyBC when you have had an episode of hypoglycemia unawareness.

You will be found fit to drive for the class of driver's licence you hold or have applied for if your doctor indicates that:

- it has been at least three months since the episode of hypoglycemic unawareness
- you have provided your doctor with a blood glucose log of at least four readings per day for 30 days in which less than 5% of the readings are below 4.0 mmol/L
- you have re-established stable glycemic awareness and control.

To ensure that you remain fit to drive you must:

- report to RoadSafetyBC and your physician if you have an episode of severe hypoglycemia or hypoglycemia unawareness
- test your blood glucose concentration immediately before driving and approximately every hour while driving and
 - not drive, or you must stop driving, when your blood glucose level falls below 6.0 mmol/L and you must not resume driving until your blood glucose level has risen above 6.0 mmol/L after food ingestion.

RoadSafetyBC will reassess your fitness to drive in one year. At that time, if your treating physician indicates that there have been no episodes of hypoglycemia unawareness within the past year, the conditions listed above will be removed and the applicable guidelines for commercial drivers with diabetes will apply.

For more information:

- Visit ICBC website at: www.icbc.com
- Visit the RoadSafetyBC website at www.gov.bc.ca/roadsafetybc
- Phone RoadSafetyBC in Victoria at 250 387-7747

