



# Breastfeeding with a hybrid closed loop

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**This leaflet gives advice on breastfeeding with a hybrid closed loop for Type 1 diabetes management.**

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## Breastfeeding and Type 1 diabetes

Exclusive breastfeeding gives your baby all the nutrients they need for the first 6 months and breastfeeding has health advantages for you and your baby, including preventing infections. Breastfeeding is a skill that can take some time to get the hang of; information on support for breastfeeding is included at the bottom of this leaflet.

After the birth of your baby, your insulin requirements will drop regardless of how you choose to feed your baby. Breastfeeding uses energy, requires additional carbohydrates and you are likely to require less insulin. This leaflet gives you information on how to make adjustments to reduce hypoglycaemia while breastfeeding when you use a hybrid closed loop for your diabetes.

## Before the birth

You can start to prepare for breastfeeding during pregnancy by collecting colostrum in the last few weeks of pregnancy. Your midwife will be able to give advice individual to your pregnancy. Skin to skin contact helps to establish breastfeeding; you can discuss this as part of your birth plan.

An individualised plan for managing glucose during and after the birth will be discussed and agreed with you at your 36-week appointment with the diabetes and obstetric team. Common adjustments at delivery include:

- Increasing the personal glucose target, to 6.0mmol/L with the CamAPS system, or 6.1 mmol/L with the MiniMed 780G or Omnipod 5.
- Changing the insulin to carbohydrate ratios to pre-pregnancy values or 1 unit per 12g of carbohydrate.
- Programming new basal rates according to the pre-pregnancy rates or calculating reduced rates based on your current usage.
- Updating the programmed weight.  
Changing the glucose targets and alarms on your sensor to pre-pregnancy values (for example, 3.9-10.0 mmol/L).

If you plan to breastfeed, it is likely that you will require further adjustments to your settings to reduce hypoglycaemia, you can discuss this with the team at your appointments or by contacting us at any time.

## **General advice on breastfeeding with a hybrid closed loop**

Blood glucose levels can vary and be unpredictable while breastfeeding.

- Check your blood glucose levels before feeding your baby.
- Make sure that you have everything you need next to you before starting feeding, including water, a snack, and hypo treatment. Some new parents find it helpful to keep a stash of hypo treatments wherever they may feed their baby in their home.
- Where possible, eat a snack with 10-15g of carbohydrate and some protein before or during feeding your baby, if required.
- If your glucose is <6.0mmol/L before feeding, have a snack right before feeding and use ease off mode with CamAPS, activity mode with Omnipod, Temp Target with MiniMed 780G, or Exercise Activity with T:slim.
- Make sure you have Glucagon available to use if you have a hypo that doesn't resolve with usual treatment, is recurrent or if you have a hypo that needs assistance.

If you are experiencing regular or increased frequency of hypos, you can make further hybrid closed loop adjustments:

- Increase the use of ease off/activity/temp target/exercise activity mode and continue this for 2-4 hours after feeding.
- Plan regular snacks at timed intervals during long feeds.
- Reduce insulin to carbohydrate ratios, for example to 1 unit per 15g carbohydrate.
- Increase your personal glucose target. With the CamAPS system increase the personal glucose target to 6.5 mmol/L; further increases by 0.5mmol/L can be performed. With the MiniMed 780G and Omnipod glucose targets can be increased to 6.7 mmol/L.
- If you have a T:slim X2, your basal rates may need reducing. Please contact us if you need assistance with this.

If you are still experiencing hypoglycaemia, we can suggest further changes. The diabetes nurses can be contacted Monday to Friday 8am-5pm on 0118 322 7478. Please leave a message and we will ring you back as soon as possible.

A follow up appointment will be arranged with your diabetes specialist nurses after you have given birth, but please contact us if you need help before then.

## **Reviewing your insulin requirements**

As your breastfeeding journey continues, you will notice your insulin requirements change. It is important to keep reviewing and adjusting in response. If you need help with this, please contact the diabetes team.

## **Support with breastfeeding**

Speak to your midwife, who can refer you to the maternity feeding team if required.

Additional support is available from:

- NHS Off to the best start – A guide to breastfeeding: [www.nhs.uk/startforlife](http://www.nhs.uk/startforlife)
- National Breastfeeding Helpline: 0300 100 0212
- Unicef Breastfeeding resources (videos and leaflets): [www.unicef.org.uk](http://www.unicef.org.uk)

## **Contact us**

Diabetes nurses can be contacted Monday to Friday 8am-5pm on 0118 322 7478.

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**Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.**

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