

Drivers with Diabetes (Class 1-4 Licence)

Why Drivers with Diabetes Submit Medical Reports

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. A Driver's Medical Examination is one tool that provides the Superintendent with the information needed to decide whether someone is fit and able to drive safely.

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.

The procedures we follow to collect information about the severity, progression, treatment or effects of diabetes with respect to driving are outlined below. In many cases, diabetes does not have an impact on a person's fitness to drive. However, as each person is affected by diabetes differently, the information we request allows us to assess each diabetic driver individually.

The Requirements

The type and frequency of assessment and follow up by the Office of the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles (OSMV) varies depending on the class of driver's licence held or applied for, as well as the type and control of diabetes:

- a) **Diabetes treated with oral medication and/or diet** – Under our policy and medical guidelines, you need to have a *Driver's Medical Examination Report* completed and submitted to OSMV when we are first made aware that you have Type 2 diabetes.

A follow up medical in one year is required so we may obtain information to assess your control of diabetes and to establish a baseline for future medical examinations. We mail these forms to you.

If your doctor indicates you maintain good control of your diabetes and have no other medical conditions affecting your fitness to drive, you will be asked to submit a driver's medical examination report every two years for as long as you hold a professional class driver's licence. We will mail the form to you.

- b) **Diabetes Treated with Insulin** – 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 these drivers, due to their type of work 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. Their meal times may frequently be delayed and on occasion may be skipped altogether.

Under our policy and medical guidelines, you need to submit a "Diabetic Package" to the Office of the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles (OSMV) yearly. The Diabetic Package consists of the following forms, which we will send to you by mail each year:

- The *Driver's Medical Examination Report* form, which your doctor completes
- The *Driver's Diabetes Questionnaire* form, which you complete
- The *Examination of Visual Function* form, which your Ophthalmologist or Optometrist completes. (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).

We require this information annually to assess the control you have of diabetes and to establish a baseline for future medical examinations. Medical information may be requested more frequently if your doctor indicates your diabetic condition is unstable or if you have other conditions that may affect driving.

All forms must be completed and forwarded together to the Office of the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles within 60 days of the date the DME was issued (you will find this date at the top of the DMER form). Please note that we cannot review the information if any documents

in the diabetic package are incomplete or missing.

If your doctor indicates that your diabetes is stable, well controlled and there are no concerns that your diabetic condition or any other medical condition affects your fitness to drive then you will be found fit for the class of driver's licence you have applied for or hold, providing you:

- Comply with the treatments and medications as directed by your doctor
- Obtain and retain an initial Certificate of Competency in blood glucose measurement from an approved Diabetic Clinic.
- Notify the Office of the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles if your medical condition relapses or deteriorates
- Record blood glucose within 1 hour before driving and every 4 hours while driving using a blood glucose meter
- Maintain and retain a Glycemic log (a written record) showing dates, times of driving and blood glucose levels before driving and every 4 hours while driving. You must retain the log for a minimum current 6 month period or since the diagnosis if the onset of diabetes occurred in the last 6 months.

You do not need to submit the glycemic log and certificate of competency to the Office of the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles routinely. However, you need to take your log each time you see your doctor to have your Diabetic Package completed so your doctor can review the log.

Please note that you should not drive any time your blood glucose is below 6 mmol/l as you could have a hypoglycemic episode.

You should be aware that American Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations prohibit drivers with insulin-dependent diabetes from operating commercial vehicles in the United States.

For more information . . .

call the Office of the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles in Victoria at (250) 387-7747.