

# Hypoglycemia unawareness takes toll on families

September 16 2013

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(HealthDay)—Family members of patients with type 1 diabetes and hypoglycemia unawareness often need support, according to a study published online Aug. 29 in *Diabetes Care*.

Julia Lawton, Ph.D., from the University of Edinburgh in the United Kingdom, and colleagues conducted in-depth interviews with 24 adult family members of people with [type 1 diabetes](#) and hypoglycemia unawareness.

The researchers found that family members described restricting their lives so they could help the person with hypoglycemia unawareness detect and treat their hypoglycemia. During a hypoglycemic episode,

some family members reported being very physically afraid of their partner/relative due to their aggressive and argumentative behavior and [personality changes](#), which can also make treatment administration difficult. When left unsupervised, family members reported feeling anxious and worried about the safety of the person with hypoglycemia unawareness. Resentment can build up over time as family members can neglect their own health and well-being to care for the person with hypoglycemia unawareness. Some family members highlighted unmet needs for information and emotional support, while some struggled to recognize and accept their own need for help.

"Our findings reveal a caregiver group currently 'in the shadow of the patient' and in urgent need of information and emotional support," the authors write.

Several authors disclosed [financial ties](#) to the pharmaceutical and medical device industries.

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
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Citation: Hypoglycemia unawareness takes toll on families (2013, September 16) retrieved 16 April 2024 from  
<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-09-hypoglycemia-unawareness-toll-families.html>

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