

Why could it be easier to fly on insulin nowadays?

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The most threatening acute complication of diabetes is hypoglycemia and in fact only few countries at the moment allow flight licence renewal to people on insulin to avoid the risk for sudden incapacitation related to hypoglycemic events. In fact England, USA and Australia are now certifying insulin treated LPL pilots as fit provided they stick to a standard protocol according to which preflight glucose levels are high enough to prevent the risk for sudden incapacitation and carbohydrates are ingested before landing as soon as their portable glucose measuring device shows glucose levels below a certain safety threshold.

In the biggest part of the world this is not accepted anyway even for UAV pilots, who are trying to enter a possible ever expanding source of gainful employment. Moreover, young and highly motivated people with type 1 diabetes willing to become class I pilots, are invariably certified as unfit.

Such an extremely prudent attitude has been fully accepted for decades but more and more sophisticated diabetes treatment and devices are nowadays flooding the market thus turning out not to be reasonable any more.

We will discuss how combining such devices with the availability of continuous glucose monitoring by the second pilot and by accredited officers onground can reassure companies and passengers on safe flight conditions and stop both pilot jobs and timeconsuming and costly airline training investments from being lost as a consequence of a more and more prevalent disease all over the world.