

Diabetes: Sick-Day Guidelines

Being sick can make your blood sugar levels hard to regulate. You can manage this problem by being prepared and having a plan for what to do when you are sick.

Store sick-day supplies where you can get to them quickly

- Keep a phone list of people you may need to call (include how to reach them on nights, weekends, and holidays):
 - Healthcare provider
 - Diabetes educator
 - Friend or family member who can help you
 - Pharmacy
- Keep extra supplies of:
 - Medications (and syringes or pen needles, if you take insulin)
 - Blood sugar testing supplies
 - Urine ketone testing strips (if you have type 1 diabetes)
- Always have these foods on hand:
 - Lifesavers or glucose tablets
 - Regular soda or fruit juice
 - Instant broth
 - Sugar-free and regular Jell-O
 - Glucagon, if it has been prescribed for you, *and* a family member or friend has been taught how to use it (remember to check the expiration date twice a year)

Take care of yourself when you are sick

- Check your blood sugar more often and keep a record of your results.
- Don't stop taking your medications without calling your healthcare provider.
- If you take long-acting insulin, do not stop. If you are worried that the dose is too high, it is okay to reduce the dose by 25%.
- Drink lots of water and eat small, frequent meals.
- If you can't eat food, drink liquids that don't upset your stomach, such as warm broth or soda.
- If you have been told to check for ketones in your urine when you are sick, check when your blood sugar is higher than 250 mg/dl.

Eat or drink if your blood sugar is less than 80 mg/dl

- Drink regular (not sugar-free) beverages
- Eat regular (not sugar-free) Jell-O, ice cream, pudding

Contact your healthcare provider if you

- Can't keep food or drink down for more than 4 hours
- Vomit more than once
- Have diarrhea more than 4 times
- Have blood sugars greater than 250 mg/dl for more than 8 hours
- Have moderate or high ketones (people with type 1 diabetes)
- Are sick or have a fever for more than 24 hours
- Think you need a change in the dose of your medicine

Take good care of yourself

- Have a plan!
- Keep your sick-day supplies where you can get to them quickly
- Drink lots of fluids when you are sick
- Check your blood sugar frequently
- Don't skip your medicine

Patient Care Advice (PCOI) documents are available under **Resources** on your Patient Gateway home page.

This document is not a substitute for your care team's medical advice and should not be relied upon for treatment for specific medical conditions.

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