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.*

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