

Sick Days and Diabetes

Be Prepared

Infections can lead to elevated blood sugar levels. Be prepared. Work with your diabetes team to figure out a plan ahead of time for medications and blood sugar targets.



If you are sick:

1 Keep taking your insulin or your diabetes medications.

Your diabetes medications may need to be adjusted up or down to keep blood sugars in target. Contact your healthcare team if your blood sugar is above or below your target range so they can help you make any needed changes in your usual plan.

2 Test your blood sugar levels every four hours and keep a log.

Knowing your blood sugar levels helps you and your diabetes team make any needed changes to your usual diabetes medication routine. If you are unable to check your own blood sugar levels, ask someone to help you check.

3 If your blood sugar is **240mg/dl or higher** check for ketones (if instructed to do so by your diabetes team). If your ketones are moderate to large call your provider right away.

4 Try to **eat as much of your regular meals and snacks as possible**. Smaller, more frequent meals and liquid or soft foods may be easier to tolerate.

5 Still able to eat?

Make sure to drink plenty of non-calorie liquids like tea, broth, and water to prevent dehydration. This is especially important if you are vomiting, have diarrhea or have frequent urination.

6 If you are unable to eat your regular meal plan,

substitute the below foods that have 15 grams of carbohydrate every 1 to 2 hours. If you have been throwing up or are nauseated, choose liquids and sip very slowly. The box below is a list of foods with one serving of carbohydrate.

7 Ask about getting a flu, pneumonia, RSV and COVID-19 vaccine when you are well.

Snacks with 15 grams of carbohydrate:

• ½ fruit juice	• ½ cup applesauce
• Small fruit	• ½ cup regular soft drink
• 1 slice toast	• ½ cup ice cream
• ½ cup hot cereal	• 6 saltine crackers



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Be prepared for illness. Have a Sick Day Kit Ready!

- Extra medications for diabetes and other symptoms
- Blood glucose testing equipment
- Thermometer
- Pulse oximeter oxygen saturation monitor
- Sugary and non-sugary fluids
- Ketone test strips (if instructed by your healthcare team)
- A sick day plan of action

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During illness, call your healthcare provider if:

- If you can't get your blood sugar levels below 300mg/dl.
- You have a persistent fever.
- You vomit more than once or have diarrhea 5 or more times within 24 hours.
- You are very weak, have stomach pain or difficulty breathing.
- If your urine shows moderate or large amounts of ketones.
- For other reasons that you and your provider have discussed.

Seek Medical Attention Immediately

Emergency Symptoms - Seek Medical Attention Immediately: *

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trouble breathing• Persistent pain or pressure in the chest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bluish lips or face• Inability to stay awake• New confusion
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*This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning you.

More info at the CDC

<https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/diabetes-complications/diabetes-immune-system.html>