

Sick Day Management for People with Type 1 Diabetes

When you are unwell, managing your glucose levels can be a challenge. Be prepared and know how to manage your diabetes when you are sick.

Important reminders

1. **Check your glucose level** if you are experiencing hyperglycemia every 2 hours while you are awake and every 4 hours overnight.
2. **Check your ketones** using urine ketone strips or a blood ketone meter if your glucose level is $>14\text{mmol/L}$ or if you are experiencing abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea. When you have ketones it indicates you need more insulin and you need to drink water or carbohydrate-free fluids.

Insulin Adjustments:

Based on glucose levels, you may need to make insulin adjustments when you are sick:

- **Never stop taking your basal (long acting) insulin.**
- Continue to take your meal time insulin.
- Often extra meal time insulin is needed, especially if your glucose levels are high.

When to I ask for help?

- If your glucose level stays lower than 4 mmol/L for 2 consecutive readings and does not respond to hypoglycemia treatment.
- If your glucose level stays higher than 14 mmol/L for 2 or more readings and does not respond to increased insulin and fluids.
- If you have moderate to high or high ketones.
- If you do not know how to adjust your insulin.
- If you have been sick for 2 days and are not getting better.
- If you have symptoms of dehydration, such as dry mouth, extreme thirst, little to no urination or darker urine than usual.
- If you are unable to eat or drink due to vomiting.

Dietary Recommendations:

- If you are unable to follow your usual meal plan, have 10-15 grams of carbohydrate every hour. Try to consume a minimum of 130 grams per day.
- Make sure you are drinking liquids if you are unable to keep down solid food. Drink one cup of liquid every hour while you are awake to prevent dehydration. If you are unable to hold down liquids, you may need to go to the emergency room or hospital.

You may need to choose lighter foods such as those listed below. Each of these items equals approximately 15 grams of carbohydrate or 1 carbohydrate choice.

- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup regular soft drink (not diet, avoid caffeinated drinks)
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup fruit juice
- 1 twin popsicle
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup prepared Jell-O™, flavoured gelatin or jelly powder(not diet)
- 1 cup sports drink
- 1 cup chicken noodle soup or cream soup*
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked cereal
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup plain ice cream*, custard*, pudding*, apple sauce
- 1 slice toast
- 7 soda crackers
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup flavoured yogurt*

*(consider limiting milk products if vomiting or diarrhea)

If glucose is more than 14mmol/L, drink at least 1 cup of carbohydrate-free fluids per hour and these can include:

- Water
- Any no sugar added liquid/powder water enhancer (ie. Crystal Light)
- Clear soup or broth
- Diet soft drink
- Tea

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