

# Sick Day Management for People with Type 2 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** every 4 hours or as recommended by your health care team. Target glucose levels can be a little “relaxed” when sick.
2. **There are medications that should be temporarily stopped when you are eating less than normal, symptoms last more than 24 hours and you continue to be dehydrated.** Ask your health care provider (pharmacist, doctor, nurse, dietitian) about sick day medication list.
3. **Continue to take your meal time insulin.** Often extra meal time insulin is needed especially if your glucose levels are high.  
**Never stop taking your basal (long acting) insulin.**  
**Your doses may need to be adjusted.**

## When to 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 been told to check your ketones and they are moderate to high or high.
- 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 taking diabetes medication and/or insulin and you are unable to eat or drink.

**Call an ambulance** if you have chest pain or difficulty breathing.

## Dietary recommendations

- Drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated. High glucose levels, illness, vomiting, diarrhea and fever may cause dehydration.
- It is important to follow your usual meal plan if possible. Your body needs carbohydrates for energy and to balance with your medications and/or insulin.
- You may need to choose lighter foods that provide about the same amount of carbohydrates as your missed meals or snack(s).
- If you are unable to follow your usual meal plan, have one serving of carbohydrate containing food/fluids Eg; 15 grams of carbohydrate (or 1 Carb Choice) every hour while awake.
- **If your glucose level is more than 14 mmol/L**, consider having sugar-free fluids.

### Carbohydrate containing fluids/foods: 15g of carbohydrates or 1 carb choice

- 2/3 cup regular soft drink (not diet, avoid caffeinated drinks)
- 2/3 cup fruit juice
- 1 twin popsicle
- ½ cup prepared Jell-O™, flavoured gelatin or jelly powder(not diet)
- 1 cup sports drink
- 1 cup chicken noodle soup or cream soup\*
- ½ cup cooked cereal
- ½ cup plain ice cream\*, custard\*, pudding\*, apple sauce
- 1 slice toast
- 7 soda crackers
- ½ cup flavoured yogurt\*

\*(consider limiting milk products if vomiting or diarrhea)

### Sugar-free fluids:

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