

DIABETES: A SICK DAY PLAN

Your diabetes can be difficult to manage when you are sick.

- When you are sick, your body releases stress hormones which cause the liver to release more glucose than normal in the bloodstream.
- Illness is a stress to your body and includes any type of infections, colds or flu.
- Pain can also raise your blood glucose levels.
- Make sure you give yourself some extra care and prevent your blood glucose levels from getting out of control.

Extra blood sugar testing, usually every two to four hours is recommended because your body makes extra glucose during periods of illness. If you are unable to test your blood sugar, ask a family member or significant other to test your blood sugar for you.

Never stop taking your medications-even when you're vomiting, unless instructed by your primary care provider.

Check your temperature to find out if you have developed a fever. A good rule of thumb is to check it every four to six hours.

Drink plenty of carbohydrate free, caffeine free fluids to prevent dehydration. Drink one-half cup to one cup of water, diet soda or broth every hour. Drink one cup every hour if vomiting and/or diarrhea.

Set an alarm clock as a reminder to make sure you're getting what you need when you need it. Let someone know you are sick so they can check on you periodically.

Learn when to call your primary care provider:

- Blood glucose levels consistently greater than 240 (three times in a row).
- Vomiting more than once.
- Diarrhea more than five times in 24 hours.
- Temperature of 101 degrees F or greater or shaking and chills.
- Urine ketone readings moderate or greater (with type 1 diabetes).
- When you do not know how to care for your self.
- When sick for a couple of days without improvement.

Over the counter medications may contain sugar and can affect your blood sugar. Always check with your primary care provider before taking them.

If you are unable to tolerate your regular meals, try replacing your carbohydrates with the following: (Each item represents approximately 1 carbohydrate serving or 15gms of carbohydrate)

- 1 slice of bread or toast
- 1/2 cup applesauce
- Four ounces of 100% fruit juice, regular soda or 8oz of Gatorade
- Six salted crackers or three graham crackers
- 1/2 cup of regular ice-cream, sugar free pudding, or gelatin
- 3 oz frozen fruit bar or Popsicle
- 1/4 cup sherbet
- 1/3 cup plain rice
- 1 cup broth based soup

Ask your primary care provider about receiving the flu and/or pneumonia vaccine to prevent illness.

Remember to plan ahead for a sick day; have a sick day tool kit readily available.

Items to keep in a sick day kit:

- Thermometer
- Tylenol
- Phone number of primary care provider/pharmacy and other important numbers
- Notepad/pen
- List of medications
- Extra blood sugar monitoring supplies (including ketone strips – for people with Type 1 Diabetes)
- Shelf stable sick day food items such as:
 - Soups and broths (dry/canned)
 - Gelatin boxes (regular/diet)
 - Crackers
 - Juice, bottled/canned/boxed
 - Ginger ale (regular/diet)
 - Gatorade
 - Powdered sugar free beverages
 - Applesauce.

Please share these sick day guidelines with your family, or significant other.