

# Sick Days

## When You Are Sick

Anytime you are sick, even a cold or the flu, you can get high blood sugar. If you have diabetes, it is very important to plan ahead. When you are sick your blood sugar can go very high. The high blood sugar could lead to very serious problems. Having a plan before you are sick will help you prevent more serious problems.

## What Happens When You Are Sick

Your stress level goes up when you are sick. This causes your body to release a hormone to help fight the disease. In addition to fighting the disease, the hormones also make your blood sugar higher and keep the insulin from working.

High blood sugar can cause ketoacidosis in people with type 1 diabetes and hyperosmolar hyperglycemic non-ketotic coma in people with type 2 diabetes. Both of these conditions are very serious and can be life-threatening.



## Make a "Sick Day Plan". Use the plan to help you.

- ✚ Talk with your provider about when you should call
- ✚ Talk with your provider about if you should take your medicine
- ✚ Ask the provider how often you should check your blood sugar and urine ketones
- ✚ Ask your provider what medicine to take
- ✚ Ask your provider when you should eat
- ✚ Know how to talk with a provider on weekends, holidays and at night
- ✚ Use your sick day worksheet to list your information and keep it in a safe place

*\*Always ask a pharmacist for help picking an over-the-counter medicine.*



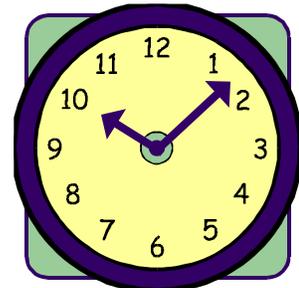
## All diabetics should have the following things on hand:

- An extra week's supply of insulin or diabetes pills
- Sugar-free cough medicine
- Aspirin and non-aspirin pain medicine (ask your provider which ones you can take)
- Antacids
- Medicine for diarrhea and vomiting
- Thermometer
- Your glucometer and strips



## When should you measure your temperature, blood sugar and ketones?

-  People with type 1 diabetes should monitor their blood sugar and ketones every four hours. People with type 2 diabetes should check their blood sugar every two to four hours and check for ketones if the blood sugar is over 240mg/dl.
-  Check your temperature every four hours
-  Continue to monitor until you feel better



Use your sick day record to record your blood sugars, urine ketones, temperature and your symptoms. Also include what you have had to eat and what medicine you have taken.

## Diabetes Medicine

When you are sick you still need to take your medicine. Even if you are throwing up, do not stop your medicine unless your provider tells you **not** to take it. If you cannot take your pills, you may need insulin. The body makes extra glucose (sugar) when you are sick. Make sure you understand your provider's instructions for what to take and how much.

## What should you eat when you are sick?

It is best if you can eat and drink your regular diet. Add plenty of fluids by drinking one-half to one cup of sugar-free liquids every one to two hours. Examples would be: water, tea without sugar, instant broth, diet sodas, sugar-free Popsicles®, sugar-free Jell-O® and soups.



If you **cannot eat** and drink your regular food then eat or sip about 15 grams of carbohydrates every hour. Examples are:

- ❖  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup low-fat ice cream
- ❖  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup soft yogurt
- ❖  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup sherbet
- ❖  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup Jell-O®
- ❖ 1 cup creamed soup (thinned)
- ❖ 1 cup milk
- ❖  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup soft pudding
- ❖  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cooked cereal
- ❖ 1 tbsp honey
- ❖  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup regular soda
- ❖  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup grape juice
- ❖  $\frac{1}{2}$  twin Popsicle®

- ✚ If you want more than one of the above in an hour, use sugar-free foods
- ✚ It is easier for your body to digest carbohydrates than proteins and fat
- ✚ Small frequent feedings are quickly absorbed and quickly changed to blood glucose
- ✚ Keep a record of how much you eat and drink
- ✚ Have someone check in on you



If you have been very sick to your stomach, start drinking clear liquids like broth, tea, apple juice or grape juice, eating Jell-O® or Popsicles®. When you tolerate this, move on to full liquids like tomato or orange juice, ice cream, and cream soups.

## Dehydration

Dehydration can be a problem if you do not replace your fluids or if you have diarrhea and vomiting.

### Signs and Symptoms of Dehydration

- ✚ Dry mouth
- ✚ Thirst
- ✚ Decreased urination
- ✚ Dry, flushed skin
- ✚ Dry lips
- ✚ Higher than normal body temperature

If you notice these signs of dehydration, drink clear liquids until signs go away. **If you can't sip fluids call your provider or the Health Care Hotline immediately!**



### Medicine

When you are sick, you may want to take over-the-counter medicines. Always check the label before you buy them to check for sugar. Tell the pharmacist your medical problems (diabetes, hypertension, etc) and ask for help to find sugar-free medicine. Many medicines can affect your blood sugar level.

- ✚ Some antibiotics can lower blood sugar levels in people with type 2 diabetes
- ✚ Decongestants and products to treat colds can increase your blood sugar level and blood pressure

## When do I call my provider?

4C's Clinic patients call 409-943-3430



- ✚ If you have blood sugar levels of 200 to 400 mg/dl and have symptoms call the clinic or your provider
- ✚ If you have blood sugar levels above 400 ALWAYS call your provider
- ✚ If you have blood sugar levels under 70 mg/dl for two readings in a row and you have symptoms
- ✚ If you have an upset stomach, vomiting or diarrhea for more than four to six hours
- ✚ If you are sick to your stomach and can not keep fluids down
- ✚ If you have a temperature of 101 or more for over 24 hours.
- ✚ If you have dry mouth, thirst, decreased urination and dry, flushed skin
- ✚ If you have pain that does not go away
- ✚ If you are sick for more than two days
- ✚ If you are not sure about something

**Be sure to keep accurate notes in you "Sick Day Record" and have them with you when you call your provider.**

- ✚ Temperature (time and temperature)
- ✚ Blood sugar (time and number)
- ✚ Medicine you have taken (time taken and if it helped)
- ✚ What you have eaten and had to drink
- ✚ How many times you have vomited or had diarrhea

If you go to the emergency room, be sure to tell them you have diabetes and take the above information with you.

Wear a medical alert bracelet or have information with you that you have diabetes at all times.

Be sure to get a flu shot every year, the flu can be dangerous. Ask your provider if you should get a pneumonia shot.



**Here are some ideas for your action plan. Pick things you are willing to try. Good luck and share with your educator and provider!**

- WHAT you are going to do
- HOW MUCH you will do
- WHEN you will do it
- HOW OFTEN you will do it

<b>Sick Day Plan</b>	I will discuss the "Ask Your Provider" section of the "Sick Day Plan" with my provider at my next visit and write the information on my plan. I will place the "Sick Day Plan" <i>(where)</i> .
<b>Foods For Sick Days</b>	I will buy (foods) from the list of foods for sick days <i>(when)</i> and keep them on hand.
<b>Medicine For Sick Days</b>	I will buy the <i>(medicine my provider suggests to treat common illnesses)</i> <i>(when)</i> and keep it handy for sick days.