

HANDLING SICK DAYS WITH T1D



WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN I AM SICK?

- Check your blood sugar at least every 4 hours, except when you are sleeping. You can do this by looking at your CGM or by fingerstick.

- If your sugars are too high, it means you may need to give extra insulin.
- If your sugars are too low, it means you need to eat a sugar.

Often sugars are high when you are sick due to insulin resistance. This means your body needs more insulin than usual to bring your sugars back down. Your diabetes team can give you advice on how much to give.

- Check your urine for ketones each time you pee if your sugars are unusually high. Let your diabetes team know if they become positive. This is very important if you are on an insulin pump.
- Be sure to eat and drink enough carbs so you can give insulin without going too low.
- You need to go to the emergency department if you cannot eat or drink fluids.
- Drink enough water so you do not get dehydrated.
- Do not stop your insulin. You cannot stop your insulin when you have type 1 diabetes (T1D)! Ask your diabetes team how to change your doses if you are too high or too low.

**Use
carbs, water
and insulin to
keep your body
in balance and
healthy!**

WHAT THINGS I SHOULD KEEP ON HAND IN CASE I GET SICK?

In case you get sick, there are a few supplies you should keep on hand:

- Urine or blood test strips for testing ketone levels
- Syringes for injecting insulin if you are on a pump (or insulin pens plus pen needles)
- Sometimes your diabetes provider will give you anti-nausea medication to keep on hand to prevent vomiting
- Liquids that are sugar-free and liquids that have sugar.
 - Some examples are diet and regular drinks, sports drinks, clear juices (like apple juice), bouillon, and chicken broth.
 - You can use these to replace fluids your body has lost and to prevent getting dehydrated.

- Have liquids with sugar to replace needed calories if you are not able to eat. Popsicles with sugar are also good.



- Have sugar-free cough medicine, decongestants, and cough drops.



SHOULD I CHECK IN WITH MY DIABETES TEAM WHEN I AM SICK?

Yes. Check in if your sugars are higher or lower than normal. You may need changes in your insulin doses. You **MUST** be sure to let your diabetes team know as soon as possible if you:

- Are vomiting or
- Cannot keep down fluids

These symptoms often mean you need to go to the emergency department for IV fluids.



WHAT HAPPENS IF I AM IN THE HOSPITAL?

If you are in the hospital, it can be scary for many reasons. Many hospitals have their own rules for taking care of people with diabetes. But most of the people with diabetes that they see in the hospital have type 2 diabetes, since that is the most common type. This means there are some things you, your family and friends can do to make sure things go well for you.

These things are:

1. Tell the people in the hospital that you have type 1 diabetes, not type 2 diabetes.
2. Be sure that they give you food and insulin or IV sugar and insulin if you are not eating. People with type 1 diabetes always need to be given sugar and insulin.
3. If you are on an insulin pump, you can ask if you can stay on your pump for treating your diabetes. Many places allow this.
4. If you are on shots you can ask to:
 - Give yourself insulin injections or
 - Ask that they give them to you

Some hospitals have rules that they will have to give the shots. Either way, work with the doctors to figure out the best doses for you.



It is very important to keep a sick day emergency kit. Include sugar-free as well as regular drinks.

5. If you are on a CGM, you can ask if you can use it to manage your diabetes. Even if they still want you to have finger sticks, you can keep your CGM on unless you are having an MRI. Then you would need to take it off. Sometimes you need to take it off for other tests, such as a CT scan. So, ask your doctors if you need to take off your CGM sensor for certain tests.
6. Make sure you always have juice or glucose tablets near your bed in case you need to treat a low sugar reaction. It can also help to have snacks on hand. If you are not supposed to be eating, you need to contact a nurse or other provider if you are going low so they can give you glucose in your vein.
7. Keep in mind that you know how to manage your diabetes better than anyone. Even so, in the hospital your body may respond in a different way when sick. Work with your doctors to figure out the best insulin doses.
8. Know that when in the hospital, your blood sugars may be higher than when you are home. But if you can keep your sugars in the range of 150 to 180 mg/dl that is considered safe. You do not want to be too low or too high.

I will make my sick day kit. Last week I was sick. I could have used some of those items to help keep my blood sugar from going too high.

