

Healthy Living: Diabetes Care During Sick Days¹

Jennifer Hillan²

Being sick causes blood glucose levels to rise and can lead to serious conditions that can put you in a coma. It's important to have a plan to manage sick days so you are prepared ahead of time. Read on to learn how!

Take Your Diabetes Medicines

It's important to take your insulin or diabetes pills even if you aren't eating as much as usual. Your blood glucose goes up when you are sick, so you may actually need more medication than usual.



Check Blood Glucose and Urine Ketones

Check your blood glucose levels more often than usual when you are sick. If you have type 1 diabetes, measure blood glucose and urine ketones every four hours.

If you have type 2 diabetes, check blood glucose at least four times a day. Measure urine ketones if your blood glucose is higher than 300, or as directed by your health care provider.

Choose the Right Cold Medicine

Some over-the-counter cold and flu medicines can affect your blood glucose. Ask your pharmacist or health care provider about the best medication to take.

Keep the right medicines on hand so you are prepared for when you are sick.

Eat and Drink

Try to stick to your regular meal plan if you can. If not, try to get your normal amount of calories by eating foods that are easy on the stomach, like regular (not diet) gelatin, crackers, soup, and applesauce.

It's very important to drink a glass of liquid (alcohol-free and caffeine-free) every hour when you are sick.



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2. Jennifer Hillan, MSH, RD, LD/N, ENAFS nutrition educator, Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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Sick Day Foods

Be prepared for sick days by having some of these foods and drinks on hand. Each one contains ten to fifteen grams of carbohydrates.

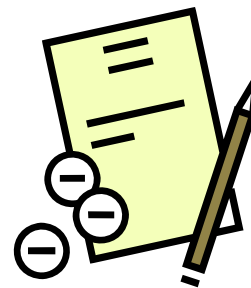
- 1 double-stick popsicle
- 1 cup sports drink
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup soup
- ½ cup fruit juice or regular (not diet) soda
- ½ cup lemonade
- 6 saltine crackers
- 5 vanilla wafers
- 3 graham crackers
- 1 slice toast
- ½ cup cooked cereal
- ⅓ cup frozen yogurt
- ½ cup regular ice cream
- ½ cup sugar-free pudding
- ½ cup regular (not diet) gelatin
- ½ cup mashed potatoes
- ¼ cup sherbet
- ¼ cup regular pudding

When to Call Your Diabetes Team

- ✓ You've been sick or have had a fever for a couple of days and aren't getting better.
- ✓ You've been vomiting or have had diarrhea for more than six hours.
- ✓ You have moderate or high levels of ketones in your urine.
- ✓ Your glucose levels are higher than 240, even though you've taken the extra insulin according to your sick-day plan.
- ✓ You take diabetes pills, and your glucose level is more than 240 before meals and stays there for more than twenty-four hours.
- ✓ Your chest hurts, you have trouble breathing, your breath smells fruity, or your lips or tongue are dry and cracked.
- ✓ You don't know what to do to take care of yourself.

Make a Plan

Work with your diabetes care team to make a plan for sick days.



Diabetes medication for sick days:

How often to measure blood glucose:

How often to measure urine ketones:

What cold or flu medicines to take:

Meal plan:

Important phone numbers:
