

Diabetes: Just the Basics

Sick Day Guidelines

Being sick can make your blood sugar levels very high. This can lead to serious problems. You can prevent problems by having a plan for what to do when you are sick.

Be prepared and store sick day supplies where you can get to them quickly

- Keep a phone list of people you may need to call (include how to reach them on nights, weekends and holidays)
 - Healthcare provider
 - Diabetes educator
 - Friend or family member who can help you
- Keep extra supplies
 - Medications (and syringes if you take insulin)
 - Blood sugar testing supplies
 - Urine ketone testing strips (if you have type 1 diabetes)
- Always have on hand:
 - Lifesavers or glucose tablets
 - Regular soda (not diet)
 - Fruit juice
 - Instant broth
 - Sugar-free and regular Jell-O

Taking care of yourself when you are sick

- Check your blood sugar more often. Keep a record of your results.
- Don't stop taking your medications without calling your healthcare provider. You may need to adjust your medications.
- Drink lots of water
- Be sure to eat small, frequent meals
- If you can't eat, have liquids and foods that don't upset your stomach
 - If your blood sugar is less than 80
 - Drink regular (not sugar-free) beverages
 - Eat regular (not sugar-free) Jell-O, ice cream, pudding
- If you have been told to check for ketones in your urine when you are sick, check when your blood sugar is higher than 250

You should call your healthcare provider if you:

- Can't keep food or drink down for more than 4 hours
- Vomit more than once
- Have diarrhea more than 4 times
- Have moderate or high ketones (people with type 1 diabetes)
- Are sick for more than 24 hours
- Have a high fever for more than 24 hours
- Think you need a change in the dose of your medicine

Steps To Better Health

- Drink lots of fluids when you are sick
- Keep your sick day supplies where you can get to them quickly
- Have a plan!

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High Blood Sugar (Hyperglycemia)

High blood sugar is when there is too much sugar in your blood. Very high blood sugars (higher than 250) can cause immediate problems.

Blood sugars are normally higher after eating. Blood sugars that are over 130 before meals or 180 after meals are usually too high. *Talk with your healthcare provider to set your blood sugar goals and fill in the numbers on the chart below.*

Blood Sugar Goals		
	American Diabetes Association Recommendations	My Goals (write them here)
Before meals	90 – 130	
2 hours after meals	< 180	

Things that make your blood sugar go high

- Eating too much food
- Not taking your diabetes medicines or insulin
- Sickness
- Not exercising
- Eating or drinking sweet things (like regular soda/cola)
- Infections
- Stress
- Certain medicines (like prednisone)

How you may feel / what you may experience

- Thirsty
- Tired
- Very hungry
- Sick to your stomach
- Itchy (or have very dry skin)
- Increased urination (the amount of urine you pass and how often)
- Blurry vision
- Frequent infections

What to do if you have a high blood sugar

- Call your healthcare provider if you have 2 blood sugars over 250 on the same day
- Adjust your medicine dose if your healthcare provider tells you to
- Check your blood sugar at least every 4 hours if you are feeling sick
- Drink a lot of water (at least 1 glass every hour) to prevent dehydration

Consistently high blood sugars over a long period of time mean that your diabetes is out of control. This can cause long-term health problems such as damage to your heart, kidneys, eyes and feet. If your blood sugar is consistently high, talk with your healthcare provider. You may need changes in your diabetes plan.

Steps To Better Health

- Ask your healthcare provider for a plan if you miss a dose of diabetes medicine
- Check your blood sugar more often when it is high
- Eat regular meals, exercise, and take your medicines to keep blood sugars in your target range