

# Type 2 diabetes and sick day management

Having a sick day management plan to manage blood glucose levels is important to help prevent hyperglycaemia (high blood glucose levels) and hypoglycaemia (low blood glucose levels).

This guide should be used in consultation with your diabetes health care team.

## Factors that can affect blood glucose levels



- Common illnesses such as tonsillitis, chest, ear and urinary tract infections may cause a stress response increasing blood glucose levels.



- Medications such as steroids may raise blood glucose levels.



- Events such as emotional stress and surgery may raise blood glucose levels.



- Gastric illnesses such as gastro, gut upset, vomiting, diarrhoea, food poisoning, poor appetite may raise blood glucose levels or cause a drop in blood glucose levels.

## When to action your sick day management plan

- If you are unwell or have an infection, even if your blood glucose levels are in target.
- When blood glucose levels are greater than 15mmol/L for 8-12 hours or more, even if you feel OK.
- Based on previous experiences (e.g. infection, steroid medication).

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## Key steps in a sick day management plan

The following steps should be followed:

### 1 Continue to take your medication / insulin unless advised by your doctor

If you are on insulin, expect to increase your insulin dose/s

- Extra insulin should be rapid acting or short acting and in addition to your usual dose/s
- You may not need to wait for your usual insulin times; your diabetes team will let you know if you need to take extra insulin outside of your usual times

Occasionally glucose levels can fall during illness – this would require a reduction in insulin dose/s.



### 2 Review your diabetes medications

Certain diabetes medications may need to be stopped by your doctor if you are fasting, have the flu, gastro illness or prior to surgery. Check with your doctor.



### 3 Continue to eat and drink if possible

See nutrition tips on page 3.



### 4 Seek urgent medical attention if you remain unwell or are unable to manage your diabetes.



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## Nutrition tips

- ✓ To avoid dehydration, you should keep drinking and eating if possible.
- ✓ Aim to have 125mls – 250mls of fluid per hour.

### If your blood glucose levels are less than 15mmol/L

Have fluids containing carbohydrate (15 – 20 grams per hour)

E.g. fruit juice, soft drink, milk, sports drinks



100mls



150mls



300mls



250mls

### If your blood glucose levels are more than 15mmol/L

Have fluids which don't have carbohydrates (125 – 250 ml per hour)

E.g. water, diet soft drink, Powerade Zero, diet cordial, diet jelly, broth



## Insulin adjustment guide for sick day management

If you are on insulin, expect your insulin doses to increase. This is because your body usually needs extra insulin when you are unwell. Even if you are not eating much, are vomiting, or have diarrhoea.

The amount of extra insulin you will need is based on your blood glucose levels so these need to be checked frequently. If your BG levels are above 15.0mmol/L for 8-12 hours you should check your blood glucose levels every 2 hours.

Your sick day management plan below provides a guide to doses in different situations. This plan should be discussed with your diabetes specialist.

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**Take this form to your next appointment with your Endocrinologist for sick day management instructions on your insulin doses.**

Your usual total daily dose of insulin is:

*(add clients daily intake of basal and bolus insulin)*

When to increase insulin dose:

*e.g. If your glucose levels rise above 15 mmol/L persistently*

How much to increase insulin by:

*e.g. Increase basal insulin by 10%*

When to decrease insulin dose:

*e.g. if your glucose levels drop below 4mmol/L frequently during illness*

How much to decrease insulin by:

*e.g. decrease basal insulin by 10%*

**Clients taking premixed insulin will require individual medical advice. Please see your diabetes specialist for further information for your sick day management plan.**

## When to seek help from your medical team or go to your nearest emergency department

- Persistent hypoglycaemia
- Vomiting that persists for greater than 4 hours
- Blood or bile stained vomit
- Severe dehydration marked by increased thirst, dry mouth, dizziness/fainting, headache, decreased urination or sweating
- You or your support person feels unable to manage the situation



**Call 000 for an ambulance if you are unwell and cannot manage your diabetes**

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## Tips to remember

- ✓ Identify someone to stay with you
- ✓ Tell someone that you are unwell, a family member, neighbour or friend
- ✓ Have phone numbers of your diabetes specialist, diabetes educator and local GP at hand
- ✓ Know the location of your nearest Emergency Department

## My sick day plan

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Diabetes Specialist:

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Phone:

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Diabetes Educator:

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Phone:

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GP:

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Phone:

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## More information



Call us on **(03) 8532 1800** or



visit [www.baker.edu.au/insulin-pumps](https://www.baker.edu.au/insulin-pumps)

Based on ADEA Consumer Resource, 2014.

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