

When you're sick, managing your diabetes can become more challenging. Illnesses such as colds, flu, or stomach bugs can raise your blood sugar levels due to the release of stress hormones (like cortisol and adrenaline) that counteract insulin. This guide will help you manage your diabetes during sick days and stay safe while you recover.

General Sick Day Tips

- **Monitor Your Blood Sugar Frequently:** Check your blood sugar every 4 hours or as directed by your healthcare provider. Being sick can cause blood sugars to rise, even if you're eating less than normal.
- **Stay Hydrated:** Drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration. If you are experiencing symptoms like vomiting, diarrhea, or a fever, opt for fluids that contain salt (like broth or sports drinks).
- **Maintain Your Usual Carbohydrate Intake:** If you can eat, try to consume the same amount of carbohydrates as you would on a normal day, even if it's in smaller meals.

Special Considerations for SGLT2 Inhibitors

If you are taking an SGLT2 inhibitor (e.g., empagliflozin, dapagliflozin, canagliflozin), there are special precautions you need to follow when you are sick:

- **Stop SGLT2 Inhibitors If You Are Sick:** If you experience vomiting, diarrhea, or are passing large amounts of urine, stop taking your SGLT2 medication immediately and do not resume until you are fully recovered. This is because SGLT2 inhibitors can increase the risk of a condition called euglycemic diabetic ketoacidosis (eDKA), which can be dangerous even if your blood sugar is not very high (often below 12 mmol/L).
- **Drink Salty Fluids:** To help prevent dehydration and maintain electrolyte balance, drink fluids such as broth or sports drinks.

- **Seek Medical Care If Symptoms Worsen:** If your symptoms persist or worsen, visit a healthcare facility for further evaluation and care.

Managing Insulin and Blood Sugar Medications

- **If You Are Eating Less:** When you are unable to eat normally due to illness, you may need to adjust your medications temporarily to avoid low blood sugar (hypoglycemia). If you experience a reduced appetite or have symptoms that last more than 24 hours, temporarily stop the following medications:
 - **Secretagogues** (e.g., Gliclazide, Glyburide, Repaglinide)
 - **Metformin** (Glucophage® or Glumetza®)
 - **SGLT2 Inhibitors** (e.g., Canagliflozin, Dapagliflozin, Empagliflozin)
- **Adjusting Insulin:** If you take insulin, you might need to adjust your dose during sick days:
 - **For High Blood Sugar:** You may need to take 10% more of your usual basal (long-acting) insulin and/or 10% more rapid-acting insulin. Contact your healthcare provider for specific guidance.

Medications to Temporarily Stop if Dehydrated

If you have symptoms of dehydration (vomiting, diarrhea, fever, or excessive exposure to heat), and these last more than 24 hours, temporarily stop the following medications to prevent complications:

- **Blood Pressure / Heart Medications:**
 - **ACE Inhibitors** (e.g., Enalapril, Ramipril)
 - **ARBs** (e.g., Losartan, Valsartan)
- **Diuretics/Water Pills** (e.g., Furosemide, Hydrochlorothiazide, Spironolactone)
- **Anti-inflammatory Pain Medications** (e.g., Ibuprofen, Naproxen)

When to Seek Medical Help

- If you have persistent high blood sugar levels (e.g., above 14 mmol/L for more than 24 hours) that do not improve with adjustments.
- If you are unable to keep any fluids down due to vomiting.
- If you experience symptoms of diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA) such as difficulty breathing, severe stomach pain, or confusion.
- If your condition worsens or you are unsure about how to adjust your medications during your illness.