



Sick day guidance

for type 1 diabetes



Feeling unwell?

Check blood glucose and ketones.

Ketones **less than or equal to 1.5 mmol/L**
or negative on urine test.

Ketones **more than 1.5 mmol/L**
or positive on urine test.

Never stop taking your long-acting insulin

Stay hydrated: Sip sugar-free fluids regularly, at least 100 ml per hour aiming for 2.5–3 liters per day
If unable to eat, sip carbohydrate-containing fluids (e.g. fruit juice).

MINOR illness

Test blood glucose and ketones
at least every 4–6 hours.

Continue taking your usual
quick-acting insulin with meals.

Continue taking your usual
long-acting insulin.

If you are unwell for more than
a day and your glucose levels are above
target, consider increasing
your long-acting insulin by 1–2 units.

If your blood glucose is elevated,
consider taking extra insulin as a
correction dose of quick-acting insulin
with your meals, discuss with your
diabetes team if this is new for you.

Remember: Always wait at least 2 hours
between quick-acting insulin doses
(whether taken at meal times or as a
STAT dose) unless your diabetes team
advises otherwise.

SEVERE illness

Test blood glucose and ketones every 2 hours
Calculate total daily dose from previous day. Contact your
diabetes team or attend A&E if appropriate.

Blood Ketones
1.6–2.9 mmol/L
or urine +/-

Contact diabetes team or
out of hours services.

Extra insulin dose: Give
10% of total daily dose via
quick-acting insulin.

Re-test blood glucose and ketones every 2 hours and repeat the
above steps until ketones less than 1.5 mmol/L.

Continue taking your usual quick-acting insulin with meals.
If your blood glucose is elevated, consider taking extra insulin as
a correction dose of quick-acting insulin with your meals,
(discuss with your diabetes team if this is new for you).

Blood Ketones
more than 3.0 mmol/L
or urine +++/++++

**Attend A&E or contact diabetes
team or emergency service
immediately.**

Extra insulin dose: Give
20% of total daily dose via
quick-acting insulin.

If you are unsure, please contact your diabetes team.
If you continue to vomit, cannot keep fluids down or are unable to control your blood glucose or ketone levels, you must contact your on-call doctor or go to hospital as an emergency.