



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 litres 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
correction 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.**