

Let's Talk About...

A child with diabetes who is sick may need different amounts of insulin and food than usual. Insulin is sometimes less effective when your child is ill, and you may need to increase the dose, even if your child is too sick to eat or is vomiting. **If this is your child's first sick day since being diagnosed with diabetes, or you are unsure about the instructions explained in this handout, call the diabetes nurse for help.** Before calling, please have the following information ready:

- Your child's current blood glucose level.
- Your child's current urine ketone level.
- Total daily insulin dose
- Present problem or illness

To reach a diabetes nurse:

Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.:
Call **587-3999**.

All other hours (after 4:00 p.m. and on weekends): Call **662-1000** and ask for the diabetes nurse on call.

During illness, follow these guidelines to care for your child with diabetes:

1 Check and record your child's blood glucose every two hours.

This record of glucose level is important to help guide you in how much insulin your child needs. Based on the **blood glucose level**, follow the suggested guidelines (see chart on back) for food and insulin dose adjustments.

Diabetes treatment on a sick day

2 Test your child's urine ketones every time he urinates, regardless of whether blood sugars are **high OR low**. You can get urine ketone strips at your local pharmacy (no prescription is needed). Read instructions carefully.

Ketones are produced during periods of stress (infection or emotional stress). They come from the breakdown of fat, as a result of stress hormones or not having enough insulin. Ketones in the urine can be a sign of serious problems. Based on the urine ketone level, follow suggested guidelines for insulin dose from the chart on the back of this handout.

3 Call the diabetes nurse in the following cases:

- If you are unsure about food and insulin guidelines and need advice.
- If you cannot keep your child's blood glucose **above 80 mg/dl** and **below 300 mg/dl**.
- If your child shows any of the following signs of dehydration.
 - decreased urine output
 - dry, sunken eyes
 - dry mouth and tongue
 - rapid breathing rate
- If urine ketones are still present after 8 hours or after 4 to 6 injections of regular or Humalog insulin (see guidelines for insulin doses on the back of this handout).
- If your child has been vomiting and cannot keep fluids down after 6 hours, or after 2 to 3 hours if your child is younger than five years old.

Diabetes treatment on a sick day

The following table provides recommended food and insulin guidelines based on blood glucose and urine ketone levels, as well as your own child's unique needs.

Blood glucose level	Typical guidelines	Specific instructions
Below 80 mg/dl	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give 15 grams of carbohydrates or honey, jelly, jam, suckers, or 4-6 ounces of regular soda pop. Check the blood glucose level again after 15-20 minutes to see if blood glucose is rising. If urine ketones are present, give enough carbohydrates to bring the blood glucose level above 200 mg/dl before giving insulin. <p>Note: If your child is below 80 mg/dl with ketones and vomiting, please call the diabetes nurse as soon as possible. <i>(Numbers are listed on the front of this handout.)</i></p>	
Below 150 mg/dl	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have child drink regular soda pop or Gatorade, or suck on hard candy. If your child can't keep anything down (keeps vomiting), call the diabetes nurse. <i>(Numbers are listed on the front of this handout.)</i> Check the blood glucose level again after 15-20 minutes to see if blood glucose is rising. If urine ketones are present, give enough carbohydrates to bring the blood glucose level above 200 mg/dl before giving insulin. 	
Between 200 and 250 mg/dl Note: This is the best range for your child's blood glucose to be in on a sick day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If child is vomiting, give only half the usual NPH or Lente (longer-acting insulin) dose. If child is able to eat, give normal NPH or Lente insulin doses. If urine ketones are present, see instructions below. 	
250 mg/dl or higher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the supplemental insulin dose recommendations provided below, based on urine ketone level. If your child has been vomiting, give nothing by mouth (including water) for one-two hours after your child last vomited. Then have her slowly start drinking small sips of water or broth. 	
Urine ketone level	Typical guidelines	Specific instructions
Negative (with blood glucose levels 200-250 mg/dl or higher)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the sliding scale of regular or Humalog insulin given to you by your physician for high blood glucose levels. 	
Small (with blood glucose levels 200-250 mg/dl or higher)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to the usual dose, give 10% of the total daily dosage as extra regular (preferred) or Humalog insulin every 3 to 4 hours until ketones clear. 	
Moderate or large (with blood glucose levels 200-250 mg/dl or higher)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to the usual dose, give 20% of the total daily dosage as extra regular (preferred) or Humalog insulin every 3 to 4 hours until ketones clear. 	



Pediatric Education Services
801.662.3500 Rev. 9/01
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