

COVID-19 and Diabetes



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WHAT IS COVID-19?

People with diabetes who are infected with the coronavirus are more likely to develop severe coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and complications.

Reduce your risk

- Know how COVID-19 spreads
- Wash your hands often
- Avoid close contact with others
- Monitor your health daily
- Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Clean and disinfect

Actions to take

- Continue taking your diabetes pills and insulin as usual
- Test your blood sugar and keep track of the results, as directed by your healthcare provider
- Make sure that you have at least a 30- day supply of your diabetes medicines
- Follow your healthcare provider's instructions if you are feeling ill and sick
- Call your healthcare provider if you have concerns about your condition or feel sick

For more information visit www.cdc.gov



FLU AND PEOPLE WITH DIABETES

If you have diabetes you are three times more likely to be hospitalized from the flu and its complications than other people.

The flu may also interfere with your blood glucose levels.

People with diabetes should get the flu shot vaccine and not the nasal spray type of vaccine.

Having the flu increases your risk of pneumococcal disease which can cause pneumonia. People with diabetes should also be up to date with pneumococcal vaccination.

- Get a flu shot. It's the best way to protect yourself against the flu
- Take prescription flu medicine when your healthcare provider prescribes it
- Follow special sick day rules for people with diabetes

Sick Day Tips for People with Diabetes



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Make sure you have insulin, other diabetes medicines, and easy-to-fix foods in your home, enough for at least two weeks.

Medicines and Supplies

- Milk of magnesia
- Medicine to control diarrhea
- Antacid
- Pain reliever
- Thermometer
- Suppositories to treat vomiting

Foods

- Sports drinks
- Juice boxes
- Canned soup
- Regular gelatin
- Regular soft drinks
- Instant cooked cereals
- Crackers
- Instant pudding
- Unsweetened applesauce

If you can't eat meals, you will need to eat or drink about 50 grams of carbohydrates every 4 hours, such as 1 1/2 cups of unsweetened applesauce or 1 1/2 cups of fruit juice.



If you get sick

If you do get sick, your blood sugar can be hard to manage. You may not be able to eat or drink as much as usual, which can affect blood sugar levels.

Your doctor may ask you to test your blood sugar more often when you're sick. That's because when your body releases hormones to fight the illness, those hormones can also raise your blood sugar levels and increase how much insulin you need. This is especially important for people with type 1 diabetes who depend on insulin to live.

When your body doesn't have enough insulin, it starts breaking down fat as fuel, which produces ketones. When too many ketones are produced too fast, they can cause diabetic ketoacidosis, or DKA. **DKA is very serious and can cause a coma or even death.**

If you think you may have DKA, use an over-the-counter kit to test your urine for ketones. If ketones are present, **call your doctor right away.**

Follow these steps when you're sick even if your blood sugar is within your target range:

- **Continue taking your insulin and diabetes pills as usual**
- Test your blood sugar every 4 hours and keep track of the results
- Drink extra calorie-free liquids*, and try to eat as much as you normally would
- Weigh yourself every day. Losing weight without trying is a sign of high blood glucose.
- Check your temperature every morning and evening. A fever may be a sign of infection

*Drink plenty of fluids, 4 to 6 ounces every half-hour, to prevent dehydration. You may also need to drink beverages with sugar if you cannot get 50 grams of carbohydrates every 4 hours from other food choices. Drink small portions of these beverages to keep your blood sugar from getting too high