

Patient information

Diabetes and illness - golden rules for adolescents

- ❖ **NEVER STOP INSULIN**
- ❖ **MAKE RELATIVES/FRIENDS AWARE THAT YOU ARE UNWELL**
- ❖ **TEST BLOOD SUGARS FREQUENTLY**
(2-4 HOURLY) – ACT ON RESULTS BY INCREASING INSULIN DOSES AS PER GOLDEN RULES)
- ❖ **IF YOU HAVE DIARRHOEA + VOMITING AND UNABLE TO TOLERATE ANYTHING BY MOUTH THEN CONTACT YOUR DIABETES TEAM OR GP ASAP**
- ❖ **IF FEVER >38°C CONTACT GP TO EXCLUDE INFECTION**
- ❖ **TEST BLOOD OR URINE FOR KETONES**
(IF >1.5mmols OF BLOOD KETONES OR >2+ URINE KETONES SEEK MEDICAL ADVICE URGENTLY)
- ❖ **IF IN DOUBT SEEK MEDICAL ADVICE**
- ❖ **REST – AS YOUR BODY IS STRESSED FROM YOUR ILLNESS**
- ❖ **IF VOMITING or DEEP RAPID BREATHING or ABDOMINAL PAIN or DROWSINESS DIAL 999!**
- ❖ **DIABETES ADOLESCENT TEAM CONTACT DETAILS: 01284 713311 OR 01284 713000 OUT OF HOURS**

General Guidelines

Teenagers with diabetes do not get more illnesses than other people but coughs, colds, flu or infections may upset blood sugar control.

NEVER STOP INSULIN.

CONTINUE AT ALL TIMES ESPECIALLY DURING ILLNESS.

Part of the body's natural response to the stress of an illness (such as an infection or injury) is to make more sugar. This may lead to very high blood sugar levels and a condition known as diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA).

Ketones

Ketones are acid substances made when your body is short of insulin. Shortage of insulin means your body cannot use sugar so you start to burn your fat stores for energy. This is called ketoacidosis and it is very dangerous if untreated quickly and can be life threatening (see Golden Rules). **If your blood glucose (sugar) is continuously more than 13mmol/l or if you are vomiting, test your blood/urine for ketones by using blood ketone meter or ketostix (see Golden Rules).**

Blood glucose levels will return to your usual range once you are better. It is important to continue frequent testing of blood glucose and ketones until blood sugars are within normal range (4 – 8mmols) see blood ketone levels chart to interpret results.

How to interpret blood ketone levels

< 0.6

Under 0.6 mmol/L – normal; consider rechecking blood ketone levels in 1-2 hours if blood glucose remains elevated, above 13.9 mmol/L.

0.6-1.5

0.6-1.5 mmol/L – indicates a need for extra insulin. It is important the patient calls or follows the rules provided by their diabetes health care team and checks their blood glucose and blood ketone levels again in 1-2 hours.

>1.5

Over 1.5 mmol/L – indicates risk of diabetic ketoacidosis. Patients should call their health care team **IMMEDIATELY.**

01284 713311 or 01284 713000 out of hours and ask for on-call service

Advice on increasing insulin

What insulin do I use and what dose am I on?

If your blood glucose reading is:

Less than 13mmols/l Continue with your normal dose of insulin

13 –22mmols/l Take 4 units **extra** of a quick acting insulin (e.g. Humalog or Novorapid), even if you are not eating.

Greater than 22mmols Take 6 units **extra** of quick acting insulin (e.g. Humalog or Novorapid), even if you are not eating.

Reduce your dose of insulin back to your usual dose, when blood glucose returns to normal.

Eating

During periods of illness you may lose your appetite or be vomiting. If you cannot eat and drink as normal it is important to make sure you give your body some sort of energy. In illness, you may need to get this energy from sugar.

If you can manage food, try **one** from this list;

- A slice of toast with 2 teaspoons of full sugar jam
- 3 scoops of ice cream
- 200ml of milk and 2 biscuits or 3 crackers
- A full sugar fruit yoghurt
- 100ml fruit juice and 2 biscuits or 3 crackers.

If you are too ill to eat at all, have a small sugary drink every two hours:

- 5 dextrose tablets or 4 glucotabs
- 80ml Lucozade
- 150ml fruit juice or cola
- 250ml full sugar fizzy drink

Drinking

Whatever you manage to eat, it is important to keep drinking plenty of sugar-free fluids throughout the day so that you don't get dehydrated. Aim for a glass of water 200mls hourly/or sugar free drink

Exercise

Please avoid whilst unwell as your body is already stressed. If you continue to exercise you may encourage DKA to develop sooner.

REMEMBER

Have you go blood ketone test strips?

Are they in date?

Do you quality assure your meter with control solution?

If you prefer to use urine ketone strips have you got ketostix are they in date ?

Have you any quick acting insulin and is it in date ?

If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the hospital website www.wsh.nhs.uk and click on the link, or visit the disabledgo website:

<http://www.disabledgo.com/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust/main>