

When to see your GP or practice nurse

- If you have been vomiting and cannot keep water down, seek urgent medical advice
- If you are unable to keep any food and drink down
- If your illness lasts for more than a few days
- If you have increased thirst, weight loss or lethargy
- If your blood sugars are greater than 13 mmols/L over a 24 hour period
- If you are concerned you can ring the Diabetes Centre (945 8203, Monday - Friday 9.00am - 4.00pm) or go to A & E

Contact no.

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Illness and diabetes



Feeling under the weather?

Some illnesses or infections can cause your blood sugar levels to rise. (This is because the body's natural response to illness is to make more sugar.) Sugar levels may rise above normal levels (4-9 mmols/L) and you may feel thirsty or dehydrated.

Illness can strike suddenly, so make sure you have enough blood-testing strips, as you will need to monitor your sugar levels more frequently. Keeping some basic, sugar-free, cough medicines and painkillers in the house is useful.

Which illnesses raise your blood sugar levels ?

- Common colds or influenza
- Upset tummy
- Diarrhoea and vomiting
- Chest or urinary infection
- Boils, infected cuts, sores or ulcers
- Any infection

Blood testing

- When you are ill your blood sugar levels may alter. You should check them **at least** four times a day.
- Keep a record of the results.

If you are taking tablets and/or insulin, you may need to increase the dose while you are ill. (Contact your GP or practice nurse for advice)

NEVER stop taking your tablets or insulin even if you cannot eat

When you are ill

When you are ill try to eat your normal food. If this is difficult, choose small snack type meals containing carbohydrate or starch to maintain sugar balance. Examples are:

- Toast or bread/crumpet
- Soup and bread
- Soup and sugar free pudding
- Teacake

Eating small portions of food, more frequently, can help during illness.

either have a snack in between meals

or eat six small meals/snacks rather than three large ones



If you are eating less than half of your normal diet and unable to manage the above, try foods containing sugar. Examples are:

- Toast and jam/marmalade
- Cereal and sugar
- Puddings such as rice or custard
- Yogurt (not diet)
- Jelly and ice cream

Remember it is important to have additional sugar-free drinks between meals to keep hydrated.

If you are unable to tolerate any solid foods then you must have drinks as an alternative. Examples are:

- Build Up and Complan which are complete meal replacement drinks
- Any milk based drink such as Horlicks, Ovaltine, drinking chocolate, milky coffee, hot or cold milk
- Pure fruit juice

If you are unable to tolerate any of the above suggested foods or drinks then you may be able to manage your diabetes by using ordinary Lucozade (Not Lucozade Sport). One glass of ordinary Lucozade will take the place of one meal. Sip one glass of ordinary Lucozade over 1-2 hours.