

**WHEN YOU ARE ILL:**  
**'Sick Day Rules' for Type 2 Patients on Insulin**

**What happens when you feel unwell?**

People with diabetes do not have more illness than others but if you do become unwell it is likely that your blood glucose control will be upset.

**High blood glucose levels (Hyperglycaemia)**

If your blood glucose level is constantly above 13 mmols you may begin to develop some of the symptoms that you had before your diabetes was diagnosed. The early symptoms include:

- Increased thirst
- Dry mouth
- Passing a lot of urine
- Tiredness and lethargy
- High urine or blood glucose levels.

**Common illnesses, which could raise your blood glucose levels, include:**

- A cold, flu or virus
- Stomach upset
- Sore throats
- Urinary infections
- Chest infection
- Abscesses
- Injury i.e broken bone

Taking steroid tablet or injections will also raise your blood glucose.

**Sick Day Rules:**

- Your blood glucose may rise above normal even if you are not able to eat your normal meals or drink anything, so **NEVER STOP TAKING YOUR INSULIN**
- Test your blood glucose levels every 2-4 hours and adjust your insulin. (see adjustment leaflets.)
- To prevent dehydration try to drink 4-6 pints of sugar free liquids per day. This is approximately one glass every hour.
- If you are sick or unable to eat solid carbohydrate foods replace this with liquid carbohydrates such as Lucozade, fruit juice, ordinary lemonade/coke.
- If you are not being sick but have lost your appetite try milky drinks, ordinary jelly (not sugar free) ice cream or custard.

**Each of these contain 10 gms of carbohydrate:**

|                           |                                    |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Milk                      | 1cup (200ml)                       |
| Fruit juice (unsweetened) | 1 small glass (100ml)              |
| Lucozade                  | 50 mls                             |
| Coca cola (not diet)      | 150mls                             |
| Lemonade (not diet)       | 150mls                             |
| Ice cream                 | 1 scoop                            |
| Ordinary jelly            | 2 tablespoons                      |
| Fruit yoghurt             | $\frac{1}{2}$ small carton (60gms) |
| Plain yoghurt             | 1 small carton (120gms)            |

- As you start to feel better, reintroduce solid foods and discontinue sugary drinks.
- It is important to rest.

**Very occasionally** your blood glucose levels may fall during illness. If this happens and your blood sugar are below 4 mmols, treat "hypo" with lucozade etc (see "hypo" leaflet) reduce your insulin by 2-4 units. Keep reducing the insulin in this way until your blood glucose test rise above 4mmols. When you are better then gradually increase the insulin back to your usual dose.

**Contact your Diabetes Team OR GP urgently if :**

- You continue to vomit and/ or are unable to keep anything down.
- You have missed more than one meal.
- Your symptoms do not improve within 24-48 hours.
- You are worried about any aspect of your illness.
- You need assistance to alter your insulin doses.

**DIABETES NURSES CONTACT NUMBERS**

(during working day hours only Mon- Fri)

|                                |                     |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Ninewells Hospital Team</b> | <b>01382 632293</b> |
| <b>Angus Team</b>              | <b>01241 430303</b> |
| <b>Perth Team</b>              | <b>01738 473476</b> |