

# Pediatric Endocrinology Associates

## Sick Day Guidelines for Children with Type I Diabetes

Any type of illness mainly nausea, and diarrhea or an infection with a fever can cause your child's blood sugar to go higher. Most people think that the blood sugar will be low because your child is not able to eat or drink. But, illness is a stress that increases the body's need for energy. During illness, stress hormones are produced in the body, which increases blood sugar. **As a result, the blood sugar level will be higher when your child is ill, even if your child isn't eating.** There may be some times when the blood sugar may be low.

### Symptoms of high blood sugar:

- Increased thirst shows body's need for fluid.
- Increased urination is the body's way of getting rid of excess sugar.
- Fatigue shows low energy level because sugar is not being changed into energy due to a lack of insulin.
- Weight loss as the body is burning fat for energy.
- Dehydration as excess fluid is lost in an effort to get rid of sugar. This is more if throwing up or diarrhea are present.

If the blood sugars are not controlled during an illness and your child does not get enough insulin, ketoacidosis can occur. **Your Child may have ketones even if the blood sugar is normal.** You should be able to prevent ketoacidosis by following special guidelines when your child is sick and not able to eat his/her normal meals.

### When to Call Your Health Care Provider (Pediatrician vs. Endocrinologist)

#### Pediatrician

When your child becomes ill  
And the ketones are negative.

#### Endocrinologist

When there are positive Ketones  
Blood sugars are high or low  
Questions on insulin dose  
Suspect diabetes ketoacidosis

**When you call, have this information ready. A written record may help you recall it.**

- How long has your child been sick?
- Number of times vomited in last few hours.
- Recent blood sugar levels, three days.
- Recent urine ketone levels.
- Amount of fluid or food intake with illness.

- Any fever, did you take him to the PCP
- Amount of insulin taken and the usual insulin dose
- Recent weight.

## **Guidelines for Sick Days**

### **Checking**

1. Check your child's blood sugar every 2-4 hour's.
2. Check your child's urine for ketones every time he/she urinates, or at least every 4 hours. It is best to keep a supply of ketostix at home in case you need to test your child's urine for ketones. If ketones are moderate to large, you child will need extra insulin.

### **Insulin**

1. **Never omit your child's insulin.** Keep giving your child his or her normal Lantus or Levemir insulin. Give a correction dose of Humalog or Novolog per you Physicians order.
2. Sliding Scales (correction insulin) doses are based on the weight of your child. As your child grows, these doses will change. Please call the office for dosing advice.

If your child has symptoms of ketoacidosis and is ill, you may be advised to take the child to Miller Children's' Hospital emergency room or nearest hospital emergency room to be checked out. **Do not delay treatment. Ketoacidosis needs treatment right away. This can be a life-threatening illness.**

### **Nutrition Guidelines**

1. To prevent dehydration, your child needs to keep drinking water and other liquids. If your child is also vomiting and having diarrhea, the body is losing vital electrolytes such as potassium and sodium. These losses must be replaced. Try having your child sip small amounts of fluid every 10-15 minutes (8ounces every hour). Bouillon soups, juices, and sports drinks are all good sources of sodium and potassium.
2. If your child is not able to eat normal food, you should try to replace the carbohydrates in the normal meal plan with regular (non-diet) fluids; 7 up, Jell-O, popsicles, Gatorade. These fluids must have sugar/carbohydrates (regardless of the blood sugar level) to prevent the breakdown of fat into ketones, which leads to ketoacidosis. Your child should try these foods/drinks in small amounts often.

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