

# sick days & type 2 diabetes

**Everyday illness or infections will nearly always cause a rise in blood glucose levels whether you have type 1 or type 2 diabetes. Therefore, at the earliest sign of any form of illness such as a cold or virus, it is important for you to take action.**

What to do when unwell	When to call your doctor
<p><b>1. Tell someone</b> If you are alone, tell someone you are unwell so they can check on you.</p>	<p>If you need help and your 'carer' is unable to help you, ask them to call your doctor.</p>
<p><b>2. Test</b> Check your blood glucose levels at least every 2–4 hours (ideal targets when well are 6–8mmol/L before meals and 6–10mmol/L after meals (2 hours after starting the meal)). Refer to the <i>Blood Glucose Monitoring</i> information sheet for more details.</p>	
<p><b>3. Keep drinking and (if possible) eating</b> If you take insulin or diabetes tablets, it is important to avoid hypoglycaemia – see below. It is also important to avoid becoming dehydrated by drinking extra unsweetened fluids every hour such as water, diet soft drinks, diet cordial, weak tea, coffee, vegetable juice or broth.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>If you CAN eat normally</b> Continue to eat as normal and sip an extra ½ –1 cup of unsweetened fluids (as listed above) every hour.</li> </ul>	<p>Call your doctor. You will probably need to keep taking your diabetes tablets or insulin and will need advice about what to do.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>If you CAN'T eat normally</b> Have some easy to manage carbohydrate drinks, snacks or small meals every 1–2 hours (see suggestions on page 2).</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>If you CAN'T eat at all and your blood glucose level is:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More than 15mmol/L: Drink unsweetened fluids as listed above.</li> <li>• Less than 15mmol/L: Drink sweetened fluids as listed on page 2.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Call your doctor if you can't eat at all. Call your doctor if your blood glucose level is consistently above 15mmol/L for more than 12 hours.</p> <p>Call your doctor if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vomiting or diarrhoea continues for more than 12 hours.</li> <li>• You continue to feel unwell or become drowsy.</li> </ul>

**When unwell, test your blood glucose levels often, keep drinking and, if possible, eating – and rest. Be aware that there may be times when you will need to contact your doctor or diabetes educator.**



# sick days & type 2 diabetes

It is very important to keep up your carbohydrate and fluids, even when you are ill. Here are some ideas to provide 15 grams of carbohydrate per hour if your blood glucose levels are under 15mmol/L, especially if you take insulin or tablets for your diabetes.

Drinks providing approximately 15 grams of carbohydrate	
Milk	1 cup (250ml)
Milk + flavouring	¾ cup milk + 1 tablespoon of Milo®, Actavite® or Quik®
Fruit juice*	¾ cup
Tea or coffee	Add 1 tablespoon of sugar or honey
Hot lemon juice	Add 1 tablespoon of sugar or honey
Herbal tea	Add 1 tablespoon of sugar or honey
Gastrolyte	4 sachets
Ordinary soft drink* or cordial* (not diet)	¾ cup
Sports drink (eg: Gatorade)	1 cup
Snacks providing approximately 15 grams of carbohydrate	
Crackers or crispbread	3 Sao®/Ryvita® etc
Dry toast	1 slice
Plain sweet biscuits	3 Milk Arrowroot/Morning Coffee etc
Mashed potato	½ cup
Rice	⅓ cup
Breakfast cereals	½ cup Special K®, 2 Weetbix®
Porridge (made with water)	⅓ cup
Ordinary jelly or custard	½ cup
Ice cream	3 scoops
Ice blocks	1½ sticks

\* Care should be taken with these fluids if diarrhoea occurs. They may need to be diluted up to 1:5 for best absorption.

## Would you like to join Australia's leading diabetes organisation?

- > Dietary services
- > Free magazines
- > Children's services
- > Educational literature
- > Product discounts
- > Support groups

For more information phone **1300 136 588** or visit your State/Territory Organisation's website:

<b>ACT</b>	<a href="http://www.diabetes-act.com.au">www.diabetes-act.com.au</a>	<b>NSW</b>	<a href="http://www.australiandiabetescouncil.com">www.australiandiabetescouncil.com</a>
<b>NT</b>	<a href="http://www.healthylivingnt.org.au">www.healthylivingnt.org.au</a>	<b>QLD</b>	<a href="http://www.diabetesqueensland.org.au">www.diabetesqueensland.org.au</a>
<b>SA</b>	<a href="http://www.diabetessa.com.au">www.diabetessa.com.au</a>	<b>TAS</b>	<a href="http://www.diabetestas.com.au">www.diabetestas.com.au</a>
<b>VIC</b>	<a href="http://www.diabetesvic.org.au">www.diabetesvic.org.au</a>	<b>WA</b>	<a href="http://www.diabeteswa.com.au">www.diabeteswa.com.au</a>

The design, content and production of this diabetes information sheet have been undertaken by:

- > **ACT** Diabetes ACT
- > **NSW** Australian Diabetes Council
- > **NT** Healthy Living NT
- > **QLD** Diabetes Australia – Queensland
- > **SA** Diabetes SA
- > **TAS** Diabetes Tasmania
- > **VIC** Diabetes Australia – Vic
- > **WA** Diabetes WA

The original medical and educational content of this information sheet has been reviewed by the Health Care and Education Committee of Diabetes Australia Ltd. Photocopying this publication in its original form is permitted for educational purposes only. Reproduction in any other form by third parties is prohibited. For any matters relating to this information sheet, please contact National Publications at [dapubs@tpg.com.au](mailto:dapubs@tpg.com.au) or phone 02 9527 1951.

**Health professionals:** For bulk copies of this resource, contact your Diabetes State/Territory Organisation as listed.

Revised August 2010 A diabetes information series from Diabetes State/Territory Organisations – Copyright© 2010