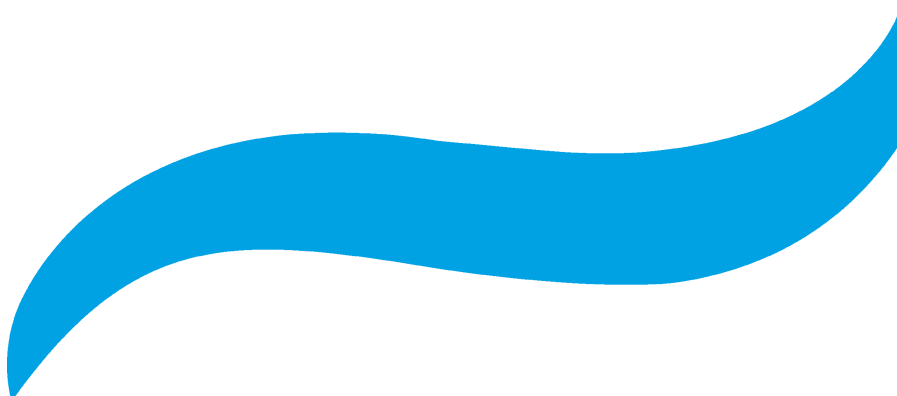




Sick Day Rules for Type 1 Diabetes

Information for patients



THE GOLDEN RULE: NEVER STOP TAKING YOUR INSULIN

When you are unwell your body's natural response is to make more sugar. This means that you will usually need to take more insulin, more fluid to drink and do more testing. This will reduce the risk of becoming seriously unwell with Diabetic Ketoacidosis (DKA). For more information look at the patient information leaflet on Diabetic Ketoacidosis available from healthcare team or on the [Diabetes MCN website](#).

FOOD AND DRINKS

- ❖ Drink non-sugary fluids, for example, water. Take 100 - 200mls or approximately a half to one glass every hour as this will help prevent you becoming dehydrated. If you cannot manage larger amounts at a time, then take regular sips.
- ❖ Continue eating as normally as you can, even if your blood sugars are high.
- ❖ If you are unable to eat solid food at meal-times, make sure you take carbohydrate in the form of pure fruit juice, ribena, milk, coca-cola or lemonade. These should be full sugar and not diet.

BLOOD GLUCOSE (SUGAR) AND KETONE MONITORING

- ❖ Monitor blood sugars levels 2 - 4 hourly during illness. The results will help guide you with how to adjust your insulin.
- ❖ **Always test for ketones during illness.** If you have ketones in your blood or urine, it is a sign that your body is short of insulin and that you need to increase your insulin dose (continue reading).
- ❖ Check for ketones every 2 - 4 hours. Increasing levels of ketones means an increased risk of DKA.
- ❖ Make sure you always keep ketone strips for testing during illness and check that they are 'in date'.

APPLYING SICK DAY RULES

Although you may not feel like it, it is very important to monitor your diabetes closely to prevent Diabetic Ketoacidosis developing.

(See NHS Lanarkshire leaflet on Diabetic Ketoacidosis for more information - [Diabetes MCN website](#))

We divide the sick day rules into those for minor illness, where blood glucose may be within normal range or raised but ketones remain negative (minor viral infection or minor injury), and those for moderate to severe illness, where blood glucose is raised and ketones are present (chest infection or high temperature).

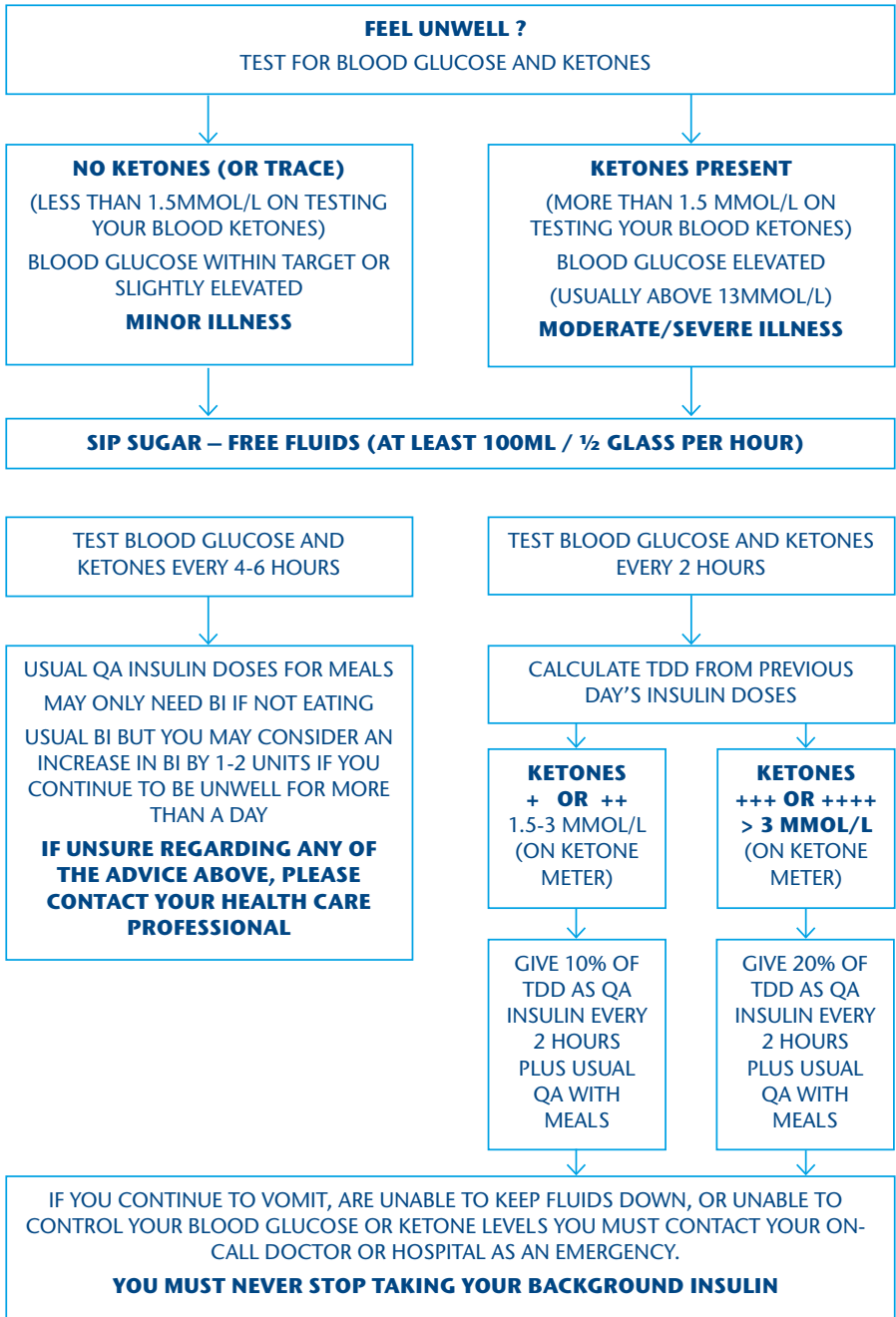
Below are abbreviations that will be used:

QA - Quick Acting Insulin Novorapid
 Fiasp
 Humalog
 Apidra
 Humulin S

BI - Background Insulin Lantus
 Abasaglar
 Insulatard
 Humulin I
 Toujeo
 Degludec

TDD - Total Daily Dose i.e. add all doses of insulin together

Please note – the information given in the following flow-chart is only appropriate for those people taking four or more injections a day. If you are taking two injections a day for your diabetes, please discuss sick day rules with your health care professional/team.



INTERPRETATION OF KETONES DURING ILLNESS

Blood ketone meter range 0.0mmol/L – 8.0mmol/L

Urine ketone	Blood ketone level	Action
Negative	Less than 0.6 mmol/L	This is within the normal range. During illness test again in 2-4 hours to re-assess
Trace	0.7-1.5 mmol/L	Give an extra dose of insulin (see previous page). Test blood glucose and ketones again in 1-2 hours
Moderate	1.6-3 mmol/L	Give an extra dose of insulin (see previous page). Seek advice from diabetes team/GP/NHS 24. Retest blood glucose and ketones in 1-2 hours.
Large	More than 3 mmol/L	Contact GP/NHS 24 or Accident & Emergency urgently. Give extra dose of insulin (see previous page).

If you need to be seen urgently go to Accident & Emergency as Diabetic Ketoacidosis (DKA) can develop quickly which is a medical emergency. Hospital admission is required if any of the following happen:

- ❖ If you can't swallow or keep fluids down
- ❖ You have persistent vomiting
- ❖ Persistent high blood sugar levels
- ❖ Persistent increasing levels of ketones
- ❖ Abdominal pain, breathlessness

If you need advice, contact your GP surgery during working hours or out of hours NHS 24 111. **Provide important details about yourself** such as:

- ❖ You have Type 1 diabetes
- ❖ Symptoms of your illness
- ❖ Information about your blood sugar and ketone levels
- ❖ You need to be seen by a doctor

You can also contact your diabetes specialist nurse for further information.

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