

Resident sick day quick guide: type 1 diabetes

START

If a resident is sick their blood glucose levels (BGLs) may increase or decrease.

All residents with diabetes should have an individualised sick day plan which should be followed when they are unwell. A delay in care can result in diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA) which is life threatening.

NEVER STOP ALL INSULIN: Doses may need to be increased or decreased.

Start the resident's sick day plan when there are symptoms or signs of an illness:

- » feeling weak, drowsy, anxious, irritable, tired
- » nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea
- » signs of fever or infection (chest, urinary, skin)
- » changes in appetite

ASSESS

Check the resident's BGL (is it low or high compared to their care plan?)

Document and report clinical signs such as:

- » changes in temperature
- » sweating
- » changes in breathing rate (such as increased or laboured)
- » signs of dehydration (reduced skin elasticity, hypotension, dry mouth, low urine output).
- » increased heart rate

MONITOR

- » Check the resident's BGL every 2 to 4 hours (if BGL is above 15 mmol/L for more than 8 to 12 hours, report to GP).
- » Monitor vital signs every 4 hours (more frequently if out of range) and report to GP
- » Check for ketones every 4 hours. If ketones are above 0.6 mmol/L, follow their sick day plan and report to GP.
- » Commence fluid balance and food intake chart.

TREAT

If the resident's BGL is **above 15 mmol/L:**

- » give 1/4 to 1/2 cup of non-sugary fluid every hour (for example water, broth, sugar-free jelly)
- » continue food intake as usual.

Caution: be aware of residents on fluid restriction.

If the resident's BGL is **below 15 mmol/L and they cannot eat as usual:**

- » give sugar-containing fluids hourly – aim for 15 g carbohydrate/hour (e.g. small jelly, one icy pole, 100 mL sports drink, gastrolyte).

REPORT

Report to GP immediately if the resident:

- » is unable to eat or drink or is vomiting
- » has BGLs above 15 mmol/L for more than 8 to 12 hours despite treatment
- » becomes drowsy
- » has ketones above 0.6 mmol/L.