

# **People with Diabetes!**

## **Before you get sick, make a plan:**

- **Gather your supplies:**
  - Phone numbers of your doctors and healthcare team, your pharmacy, and your insurance provider
  - List of medications and doses (including vitamins and supplements)
  - Simple carbs like regular soda, honey, jam, Jell-O, hard candies or popsicles to help keep your blood sugar up if you are at risk for lows and too ill to eat
  - If a state of emergency is declared, get extra refills on your prescriptions so you do not have to leave the house
  - Always have enough insulin for the week ahead, in case you get sick or cannot refill
  - Extra supplies like rubbing alcohol and soap to wash your hands
  - Glucagon and ketone strips, in case of lows and highs
  
- **Talk to your healthcare team about the following:**
  - When to call your doctor's office (for ketones, changes in food intake, medication adjustments)
  - How often to check your blood sugar
  - When to check for ketones
  - Medications you should use for colds, flu, virus, and infections
  - Any changes to your diabetes medications when you are sick

## **If you get sick, some common tips are as follows and may vary for each person:**

- Drink lots of fluids. If you're having trouble keeping water down, have small sips every 15 minutes or so throughout the day to avoid dehydration.
- If you are experiencing a low (BG below 70 mg/dl or your target range), eat 15 grams of simple carbs that are easy to digest like, honey, jam, Jell-O, hard candy, popsicles, juice or regular soda, and re-check your blood sugar in 15 minutes to make sure you are coming up. Check your blood sugar extra times throughout the day and night (generally, every 2-3 hours, with a CGM, monitor frequently)
- If your blood sugar has registered high (BG greater than 240mg/dl) more than 2 times in a row, check for ketones to avoid DKA.
- Call your doctor's office immediately, if you have medium or large ketones (and if instructed to with trace or small ketones).
- Be aware that some CGM sensors (Dexcom G5, Medtronic Enlite, and Guardian) are impacted by Acetaminophen (Tylenol). Check with finger sticks to ensure accuracy.
- Change your lancet every time you check your blood sugar.
- Wash your hands and clean your injection/infusion and finger-stick sites with soap and water or rubbing alcohol.
- **When you call your doctor:**
  - Have your glucose reading available
  - Have your ketone reading available

- Keep track of your fluid consumption (you can use a 1-liter water bottle) and report
- Be clear on your symptoms (for example are nauseated? Just a stuffy nose?)
- Ask your questions on how to manage your diabetes

**A reminder: If you have diabetes, you have legal rights that do not go away during a health crisis like COVID-19.**

- Even in a pandemic, you have the right to reasonable accommodations at work, which could include medical leave or alternate work arrangements.
- Your child's Section 504 Plan should include accommodation for extra sick days without penalty. This would apply if your child is sick or if you choose to keep him or her home from school to avoid contagion with COVID-19.
- People with diabetes who are incarcerated or in police custody are entitled to appropriate and adequate medical care, and their medical needs may change during infectious disease outbreaks.

If you are concerned you are being treated unfairly because of your diabetes, contact us to seek help from our Legal Advocacy team.

**For more information, please call 1-800-DIABETES (800-342-2383).**