

# Sick Day Guidelines When You Have Diabetes

## DURING PREGNANCY



Illness can make diabetes more difficult to manage. For example, when you have a sore throat, the flu, or are under stress, your blood sugar often goes up.



### Drink lots of liquids:

One of the most important things you can do on a sick day is stay hydrated. Drink 6-8 ounces of calorie-free, caffeine-free liquids each hour while you are awake. If you are nauseated, sip a little at a time.

*Calorie-free liquids include water, broth, sugar-free soft drinks, sugar-free gelatin, or sugar-free popsicles.*

You lose electrolytes when you go to the bathroom or vomit. They are important to keep your body's systems working properly. Drink liquids that contain salt every 3 to 4 hours to replace the electrolytes lost.

*Liquids that contain salt include broth or sugar-free sports drinks.*



### Eat throughout the day:

Eat your normal types and amounts of food if you can. Drink calorie-free liquids as recommended above to stay hydrated.

If you are unable to eat your usual meals, get your calories from regular liquids (not diet) and easy-to-digest foods. Try to take in 3 or 4 carbohydrate choices every 4 hours while you are awake. Sip on calorie-free liquids in between for hydration.

Read carbohydrate content on the food labels as needed. These choices contain about 15 grams of carbohydrates:

- 1 cup yogurt (plain or artificially sweetened)
- 1 slice dry toast
- 6 saltine crackers
- 1 cup (8 ounces) regular sports drink
- ½ cup cooked cereal (oatmeal, Malt-o-Meal, Cream of Wheat)
- 1 cup regular gelatin/Jell-O
- 1 small banana
- ⅓ cup cooked rice
- ½ cup (4 ounces) juice or regular soda

### Sample meal plan for sick days if you cannot follow your regular meal plan:

<b>Morning</b>	½ cup ginger ale (regular, not diet when sick and unable to eat normally) ½ cup oatmeal
<b>Morning snack</b>	6 saltine crackers 1 Popsicle (regular, not sugar free)
<b>Afternoon</b>	1 cup of soup ½ cup juice
<b>Afternoon snack</b>	1 cup regular sports drink ½ banana
<b>Evening</b>	1 slice of toast or 5-6 crackers 1 cup of soup ½ cup gelatin (regular, not sugar free)
<b>Evening snack</b>	½ sandwich

### Remember to continue to drink sugar-free fluids for hydration between meals and snacks.

*Kaiser Permanente does not endorse the products mentioned. Any brand names listed are for easy identification only.*

### Monitoring:

Because your sugar level may rise or change quickly, monitor it frequently during a sick day. Check your blood sugar at least every 3 to 4 hours while you are awake.

### Medications:

If you have diabetes medications, take them as usual if you are able to keep food and fluids down. Not taking your medication will cause your glucose level to rise higher. If you are unable to keep food and fluids down, call for advice if you are not sure what you should do.

Sick days may require a change in your dose of medication.

### Keeping records:

With complete information, your condition may be manageable with advice over the telephone. Write down all of your results with the time and date.

Check and record your:

- Blood sugar results
- Temperature
- Medications you have taken, including insulin dose and time

### Getting advice:

Call the advice nurse if:

- You are sick and cannot control your blood sugars.
- Your blood sugars are over 200 mg/dl.
- You are unable to eat normally or keep fluids or foods down for more than 6 hours.
- Your illness lasts more than 3 days.
- You want to take over-the-counter medicines, such as pain relievers, decongestants, herbal products, or other natural medications and need to know which ones are safe to use (or refer to [kp.org](http://kp.org) list of safe medications in pregnancy and/or Kaiser Permanente's "Baby on the Way" workbook).

**Call Labor and Delivery at: 503-571-2229 if you have low blood sugars (less than 70) and are having difficulty keeping blood sugars up.**

### Contact information

#### Labor & Delivery

503-571-2229, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

#### OB/Gyn Advice Nurse

855-285-4246, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

#### Regional Advice Nurse

503-813-2000, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week