

# Diabetes and COVID-19

## What you need to know



### What is COVID-19?

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a virus that causes respiratory illness. It can spread from person to person. Symptoms may include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

### Are you at risk because you have diabetes?

People with diabetes have a higher chance of getting very sick from COVID-19. If your diabetes is well-managed, your risk may be lower. But, if you have diabetes and other conditions, like heart disease, your chance of getting seriously ill from COVID-19 may be higher.



### How can you protect yourself?

Tips to stay healthy and safe:



Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds



Wash hands before and after checking blood sugar



Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth



Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily



Monitor your health daily



Avoid close contact with people who are sick



Keep a 6-foot distance from people not in your household



Cover mouth and nose with a mask when around others

**The CDC recommends people with diabetes closely follow their diabetes care plan for better blood sugar control**

### How can you prepare in case you get sick?

Gather supplies needed to manage your diabetes:

- Blood sugar testing supplies
- Ketone testing supplies in case of high blood sugar
- Fast acting carbs to treat low blood sugar (glucose tabs, juice, hard candies)
- Severe low blood sugar emergency kit (glucagon)
- If you use a continuous glucose monitor (CGM) have sensors as well as a back up meter and testing supplies



- Extra medicine—during a state of emergency you may be able to get extra refills on your prescriptions
  - If you can't get to a pharmacy, try mail-order or home delivery
  - If you are having trouble paying for your diabetes medicines, visit [NovoCare.com](http://NovoCare.com)
  - If you use an insulin pump, talk to your health care provider about a back-up plan





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### What to do if you get sick?

- **Call your health care provider**

- Telehealth appointments may be available



- **Check blood sugar often** (every 2-3 hours)

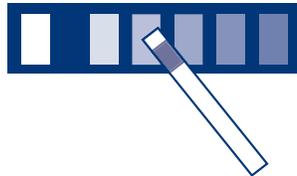
- Aim for levels between 70-180 mg/dL
- If blood sugar is low (less than 70 mg/dL) eat 15-20 grams of fast acting carbs and re-check blood sugar in 15 minutes, repeat if needed

- **Continue taking insulin and diabetes medicines as usual**

- **Drink calorie-free fluids and stay hydrated**

- **Test for ketones** every 4 to 6 hours or if blood sugar is higher than 240 mg/dL more than 2 times in a row

- Symptoms of diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA)
  - High level of ketones
  - Frequent urination
  - Vomiting
  - High blood sugar levels



- DKA is serious. Contact your health care provider immediately if you have symptoms of DKA

- **Treat underlying illness and symptoms** as instructed by your health care team. Keep in mind that some over-the-counter cold medicines can affect blood sugar levels

- Syrups that contain sugar and decongestants can raise blood sugar
  - Pills that have the same ingredients as syrups may be a better choice
- Acetaminophen (Tylenol®), aspirin, and vitamin C can cause false readings in some CGMs
  - Check blood sugar with finger sticks to make sure it is accurate



### When should you seek immediate medical care?

#### If you develop emergency warning signs of COVID-19, such as:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Bluish lips or face

#### When experiencing symptoms of high ketones/DKA:

- Vomiting
- Difficulty breathing
- Fruity odor on breath
- Confusion



### For more information:

- Cornerstones4Care.com
- NovoCare.com
- American Diabetes Association (ADA) <https://www.diabetes.org/coronavirus-covid-19>

### My health care provider

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

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