

# 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. Common symptoms may include:



Fever



Coughing



Shortness of breath

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

People with diabetes, particularly if not well controlled, may be at increased risk of developing severe illness from COVID-19. If you have other conditions, like heart disease, as well as diabetes you may have more risk of getting seriously sick from COVID-19.



### How can you protect yourself?

To protect yourself and stop the spread of infection:



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 regularly



Stay home as much as possible and avoid crowds



Keep a 6-foot distance from others



Wear a cloth face cover when around others

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

### How can you prepare for if you get sick?

Gather supplies needed to manage your diabetes:

- Blood sugar testing supplies
- Ketone testing supplies
- Fast acting carbs to treat low blood sugar (glucose tabs, juice, hard candies)
- Severe low blood sugar emergency kit (glucagon)
- Continuous glucose monitor (CGM) sensors if you use a CGM
  - Have a back-up blood glucose meter and testing supplies



- Extra medicine—during a state of emergency you may be able refill a prescription before it's due (30- or 90-day supply)
  - If you can't get to a pharmacy, try mail-order or home delivery
  - If you are having trouble paying for insulin, visit [NovoCare.com](http://NovoCare.com)
  - If you use an insulin pump, talk to your health care provider about a back-up plan, which may include having long-acting insulin and keeping a record of your pump settings





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### What to do if you get sick?

- **Call your health care provider**
- **Check blood sugar often** (every 2-3 hours)
  - Aim for levels between 70-180 mg/dL
  - If low blood sugar (less than 70 mg/dL) eat 15-20 grams of fast acting carbs and re-check blood sugar in 15 minutes, repeat if needed
- **Do not stop taking your insulin**
  - If you have a fever, insulin needs are usually higher
- **Drink lots of fluids to 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®) can cause false readings in some CGMs
    - Check blood sugar with finger sticks to make sure it is accurate



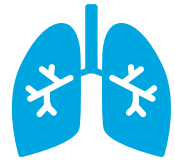
### When should you seek immediate medical care?

#### When developing symptoms of a severe viral infection:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- 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 \_\_\_\_\_