

## Managing Illness

### Type 2 Diabetes - Taking Insulin and/or tablets

When you are ill, especially if you have an infection and a high temperature, your body is less responsive to the insulin you produce naturally. Insulin is a hormone which controls your blood glucose. Being unwell therefore usually makes your blood glucose levels rise, even if you are eating less than usual.

Symptoms of high blood glucose levels may include:

- Thirst
- Passing more urine than usual
- Tiredness

**You can usually continue taking your diabetes tablets or non-insulin injection when you are unwell even if you are not eating. However, if you are severely unwell, you must stop the following medications until you have recovered:**

- SGLT-2 inhibitors e.g **empagliflozin (Jardiance)**, **canagliflozin (Invokana)**, **dapagliflozin (Forxiga)**
- **Metformin**
- You should stop your non-insulin injectable medication (**Victoza**, **Trulicity**, **Byetta**) immediately if you develop acute abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting, and seek urgent medical attention.

**Continue taking your insulin whilst you are unwell even if you are not eating your usual meals.**

- If your blood glucose levels are higher than usual, you may need to increase your insulin dose (*see table below*). Seek advice if you are unsure how to do this.
- If your blood glucose levels are lower than usual (because you are eating less than usual) you may need to reduce your insulin or any tablet you are taking which helps your body produce more insulin, such as gliclazide or glimepiride.

Blood Glucose Level	Additional insulin
11.1 to 17mmol	Add 2 extra units to usual dose
17.1 to 22mmol	Add 4 extra units to usual dose
Over 22mmol	Add 6 extra units to usual dose

## Checklist for when you are unwell.

There are some things you can do to manage your diabetes when you are unwell.

- Make sure you have enough:
  - Blood Glucose testing strips (within expiry dates)
  - Medication
  - Hypo remedies
  
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Rest
- Treat symptoms such as a high temperature with over the counter medicines such as paracetamol, and ask your pharmacist about sugar free cough syrups or sweets
  
- Ask for help...if you're not coping. Call you GP, Practice nurse or the Diabetes Centre Cumberland Infirmary Carlisle 01228 814780 West Cumberland Hospital 01946 523002 or NHS 111.
  - If you vomit for more than 4 hours or are unable to keep fluids
  - If you become drowsy and/or breathless
  - If you have acute abdominal pain

If you are struggling to eat and drink see the table below for a list of alternative food options.

- Fruit juice
- Milky drinks/puddings
- 1 scoop of ice cream
- Tins of soup
- Yoghurt
- Porridge or cereal