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## Diabetes, Insulin and Sick Day Management

### How can being sick cause a problem for a person who takes insulin?

When you're feeling stressed or your body is stressed (like when you're sick), your body will make stress hormones. These hormones:

- cause your liver to release extra sugar into your blood stream
- cause your body to not be able to use your insulin as well as before

Although you have a higher blood sugar, your body can't use this sugar properly for energy. This is because your regular dose of insulin isn't working as well. This means that you'll need to take more insulin to lower your blood sugars.

If you don't take extra insulin, your body will look for other sources of energy, like fat. When fat breaks down for energy, it releases ketones. When ketones build up, they go into your bloodstream and end up in your urine. Too many ketones can be toxic.

Too many ketones can cause a health crisis. This is called diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA).

**You may have DKA if your blood sugar is over 14.0mmol/L with one or more of these symptoms:**

- Nausea / Vomiting
- Trouble breathing
- Unusual fatigue or sleepiness
- Extreme thirst

If you feel unwell and your blood sugar is over 14mmol/L, you should test for ketones using urine or blood monitoring per your healthcare team's advice. To get rid of the ketones and to lower your blood sugar, you'll need to adjust your rapid-acting insulin doses.