

## **Pediatric Endocrine Associates**

The child with diabetes can get sick just as any other person does. A simple illness such as a cold, the flu or an infection can quickly upset your diabetes management. When this happens, you're at risk for DKA (diabetic ketoacidosis), a serious diabetes emergency. However, with proper planning, sick days can be managed without any major difficulties.

### **Sick Day Guidelines**

Ketones: Always test for ketones when you are sick and when your blood sugar is over 240mg/dl fasting or 300mg/dl during the day.

Insulin: Never omit your insulin, even when you are vomiting. Insulin doses may need to be adjusted, but it is never safe to omit a dose. In addition, it is important to keep a new bottle of short acting insulin available. You may need to give extra doses of short acting insulin throughout the day.

Blood sugars: Extra blood glucose testing on sick days is mandatory. Testing should be done every two hours. This will greatly reduce the chances of hospitalization.

Vomiting: When the blood sugar is low and no foods can be kept down, glucagon can be mixed and used as a last resort. The general rule of thumb is 1 insulin syringe unit of glucagon per year of age. If the blood sugar is not higher in 20-30 min, the dose can be repeated. If vomiting is frequent (more than two times), a **Phenergan suppository** should be given to relieve the stomach cramping, nausea and vomiting.

REMEMBER, you do not have to wait for your physician to call before giving the suppository. Wait 1 hour before offering fluids, to allow the suppository to begin working. After 1 hour, slowly start offering liquids. 1 tablespoon of fluids should be offered every 10-15 minutes. If the blood sugar is high, offer carb free drinks. However, if the blood sugar is low, you may offer sugar drinks. Gradually increase the amount of fluids and advance to solids as tolerated. The Phenergan suppository may be repeated every 3-4 hours. Remember, it is important to take in adequate calories on sick days, or the body will begin breaking down fats for energy. When this happens, ketones will appear.

Medications: As a general rule, if you need medication to treat an illness, TAKE IT!

Calling the Doctor: You will need to call your Primary physician for non-diabetes related problems. However, it is important to stay in touch with your diabetes team as well. Call your diabetes team whenever you have ketones, have high blood sugars, have vomited more than 1 time, when you are unable to eat or drink, have persistent high blood sugars or when in doubt.

If these simple rules are followed during a sick day, DKA and hospitalization can usually be prevented.