## ACTION PLAN

- Continue to test your blood glucose and blood ketones 2-4 hourly
- Remember, **NEVER STOP** your background/long-acting insulin (i.e. Levemir, Insulatard etc.)
- If not eating, use Quick Acting (QA) insulin (i.e. Novorapid, Humalog etc.) for correcting high blood glucose readings.
- If unable to eat solids, replace with liquid foods (soup, milk, fruit yoghurt, fruit juice).
- Drink sugar free fluids at least 100ml (teacup) every hour
- Know your insulin sensitivity i.e. 1 unit of quick acting insulin usually reduces blood glucose levels by 2 - 3mmol/L.
- Your individual target = **1 unit of QA reduces** blood glucose by ____ mmol/L
- Know your insulin to carbohydrate ratio i.e.**1 unit of QA insulin** to ____ grams of carbohydrates

This leaflet should be used with advice from your Diabetes Team as part of your plan of care.

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For further information visit www.diabetes.org.uk

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© Perinatal Institute, 75 Harborne Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham.B15 3BU

notes@perinatal.org.uk 0121 607 0101.

Leaflets can be viewed and printed from www.preg.info

With acknowledgment to Diabetes in Pregnancy Advisory Group

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Diabetes in Pregnancy

Patient information leaflet

# Type 1 Diabetes and Pregnancy

## 'Sick Days'

NHS

### What to do if you are unwell

If you unwell e.g. have a cold/flu, sore throat, urine infection; diarrhoea and vomiting, or are under emotional or physical stress, your blood glucose levels may rise.This can lead to a potentially life threatening condition for you and your baby called Diabetic Ketoacidosis (DKA).

**Remember**
**Blood glucose (BG) targets in pregnancy:**

- **Fasting 4.0mmol/L – 5.3mmol/L**
- **1 hour after food less than 7.8mmol/L**
- **No ketones in the blood or urine**

**Symptoms of DKA are:-**

- Feeling breathless
- Passing urine more frequently
- Feeling tired/weak
- Feeling sick and vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Blurred vision
- Thirsty
- Ketones in your blood
- High blood glucose (but can be within normal range)

**URGENT** - Go to the nearest hospital to be assessed if:-

- You have any of the symptoms listed above of DKA
- Your baby's movements alter e.g. slow down or stop
- You have persistent vomiting and diarrhoea
- You are unable to eat or drink without vomiting

## Importance of Ketones and Avoiding Diabetic Ketoacidosis (DKA)

**In type 1 diabetes** there is **no insulin** to help the body use glucose from the blood. The body is starved of energy and begins to break down fat to use as fuel. Using fat stores produces breakdown products known as ketones which are acid and can be toxic. Build up of these acids in the body can lead to a serious condition known as **ketoacidosis or 'DKA'**.

Ketones can be measured using your blood glucose meter and ketone blood strips. Increasing amounts of ketones are a warning sign when you are unwell, especially when pregnant.

In pregnancy ketones can develop very quickly even when blood glucose is only slightly high, or even when it is normal.

DKA can be a life threatening condition for your and your baby. **YOU MUST TAKE URGENT ACTION.**

Act quickly when you are unwell to stay well hydrated **(drinking more fluid than usual**). Check your blood glucose levels every 2 hours. If your blood glucose is above 10 mmol/L check for ketones even if you feel well.

### How would you know if you had DKA?

Some symptoms of DKA can be similar to labour, e.g. abdominal pain. Be aware of this and check your blood for ketones if you are unwell or your blood glucose levels are high.

**Insulin adjustment guide**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Blood Glucose** | less than 8 mmol/L | 8 to10 mmol/L | over 10 mmol/L |
| **Blood Ketones** | Less than 0.6 mmol/L | Between 0.6 and 1.5 mmol/L | Above 1.5 mmol/L |
| Action | Use the same ratio of Quick Acting insulin (QA) with your meals<br>Contact your diabetes team for advice | Give 10% of Total Daily Dose (TDD) of insulin every 2hours<br>**Contact your hospital immediately** | Give 20% of TDD as QA insulin every 2hours<br>**Contact your hospital immediately** |

*TDD = Total daily dose includes quick acting (QA) and background/long acting insulin.

Examples below:-

| *TDD | 20 | 25 | 30 | 35 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10% | 2 units | 3 units | 3 units | 4 units |
| 20% | 4 units | 5 units | 6 units | 7 units |