

Preparing for Travel and Sick Days with Diabetes

Plan ahead to make sure things go smoothly so you can enjoy your trip!

Before you go:

Visit your doctor



Ask if you need any vaccines (shots). You can ask your doctor for a letter that states you have diabetes and explains why you need your medical supplies. Your doctor can make sure you have enough prescription for your medicines.

Talk to your care team



Discuss your planned activities with your care team and plan out solutions for concerns about how diabetes might be affected. Bring healthy food and snack options. Talk with your nutritionist for travel snack and meal ideas.

Map out care



Find pharmacies and medical care close to where you plan to stay. Pack twice as much medicine as you think you need. Store medicines with carry on items so they do not get lost. Learn local phrases such as "I have diabetes" and "where is the hospital or pharmacy" in the local language.

Alert TSA



If you are flying, let airport security (TSA) know if you are wearing an insulin pump or continuous glucose monitor (CGM) to manage your diabetes. Allow for extra time for screening.

While there:

Check blood sugars often



They may be out of your target range at first, but should go back to your normal after a few days. Refer to your plan on how to treat highs or lows.

Adjust medicine timing



You may need to adjust the timing of your medicine if you are traveling long distances. If day of travel is made shorter or longer by 4 hours or less, insulin dose and food intake can stay the same. If your day of travel is made shorter by 4 hours or more, you may need to reduce your insulin on the day you depart. If your day is made longer by 4 hours or more you may need extra insulin and food. Talk with your doctor ahead of time to come up with the best plan.



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Being sick can lead to high blood sugars. Work with your diabetes care team to plan ahead for medicines and blood sugar goals so you are ready.

Tips to follow if you are sick:

- Keep taking diabetes medicines. Your dosage may need to be changed to keep blood sugars on target.
- Eat your regular meals and snacks as best you can. Try eating smaller meals more often, or try soft foods or liquids if you have trouble eating.
- If you are able to eat, make sure to drink plenty of calorie-free fluids like water, plain tea, or broth. If you are vomiting, have diarrhea, or are peeing a lot, you will need to drink more.
- If you can't eat your usual meals, have a snack with 15 grams of carb every 1-2 hours—this can be a small fruit, 1 slice of toast, half cup of apple sauce, or 6 saltine crackers. If you have nausea, choose liquids such as half a cup of fruit juice, and sip them slowly.
- Check your blood sugars (or ask a caretaker to) every 3-4 hours. Keep a log. Knowing your numbers can help your care team help you change the plan when needed.
- If blood sugars are 240 or higher and if instructed by your care team, check for ketones. If ketones are moderate or large, call your doctor right away.
- Call your healthcare provider if:
 - You can't get your blood sugars below 300
 - You have a fever that won't go away
 - You vomit more than once
 - You have diarrhea 5 times or more in one day



Follow the sick day plan that you discussed with your provider.