Sneezing. Coughing. Aching. Exhaustion. Whatever your symptoms, getting sick happens to everyone. Usually, it comes at just the wrong time too. (Hello, finals!) While you might be feeling crappy, it’s really important to keep an even closer watch on your diabetes management while you’re sick. Here are some tips to keep in mind next time you’re stuck in bed watching re-runs of Survivor and sneezing up a storm.

**MANAGING SICK DAYS**

**SICK DAY READY KIT**

- Cough Drops
- Pepto Bismal
- Nyquil or other cold medicine
- Ibuprofen
- Hot/cold pack
- Thermometer
- Tea bags
- Diet and Regular Soda
  - Ginger Ale
  - 7-Up
  - Sprite, etc.
- Fruit Juice
- Gatorade
- Saltines
- Chicken soup in a microwaveable container
- Ketone strips and meter, ketone urine strips
- Glucagon Kit
  - Talk to your doctor about micro doses if you can’t keep anything down and are running low
- Tissues

This is something that can be prepared before you leave for school (we’re looking at you, Mom and Dad.) The following items will come in handy when you start feeling crappy and don’t want to see anything but the inside of a pillow.

**RULES OF THUMB FOR SICK DAYS**

- Ask a friend to check in on you. College is a much different environment than home. Unless you tell someone you’re really sick and can’t get out of bed, you can’t expect them to know. That’s why it’s important to tell someone, and ask them to check in every few hours. Maybe you need more low supplies from the store. Maybe you’re really sick and need to be taken to the hospital. Maybe you won’t need anything at all. Whatever the case may be, your friends won’t mind checking in to make sure you’re okay.
- Check your blood sugar often—every 2–3 hours at least. Many people have trouble controlling their blood sugar when they’re sick and it’s important to keep a close eye on it.
- Continue taking insulin. While you may need to make adjustments to your basal/bolus rates to compensate for higher or lower than normal blood sugar levels, you still need insulin.
- Hydrate. Hydration is important while sick regardless of whether you have diabetes or not, but it’s especially important for you as dehydration is a risk factor for Diabetic Ketoacidosis (DKA)
- Check for ketones. Even if your blood sugar is normal, being sick can cause ketones.

**WHEN TO CALL YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER**

- You have moderate (0.6 mmol/L) to large (1.6+ mmol/L) amounts of ketones in your blood or urine
- Your blood sugar is not coming down despite correction doses
- You have symptoms that might signal ketoacidosis, dehydration, or some other serious condition i.e. your chest hurts, you’re having trouble breathing, your breath smells fruity, your lips or tongue are dry and cracked.
- You’ve been sick or have had a fever for a couple days and aren’t getting better
- You are vomiting and can’t keep food down