

How Illness and Injury Affect Diabetes

Anyone who is feeling under the weather, for whatever reason, knows that being sick is no fun.

But when you have diabetes, you need to be especially careful when you are sick because illness has a direct impact on your blood glucose level.

When your body is under stress, as it is when you have an illness, like a cold, or the flu; an infection, like a urinary tract infection, ear infection or eye infection; an injury, such as having a broken bone, a foot ulcer or are recovering from surgery; or even sometimes during difficult emotional times, hormones are released to help your body handle the stress.

These hormones often cause symptoms that signal they are fighting the stressor, such as a rise in your temperature.

Another common result of these hormones is a rise in blood glucose, sometimes to extremely high and dangerous levels.

It is also possible for your body to be fighting an infection without having any obvious symptoms. If you notice your blood glucose is high and there is no other reason for the change, you may be fighting an illness or infection.

With or without symptoms, high blood glucose will make it harder for your body to fight the illness.

If you don't take action, your illness will probably get worse, which can raise your blood glucose even more.

If this damaging cycle of illness and high blood glucose is not controlled, you can end up in the emergency room, or even in the intensive care unit of the hospital.

Take action against your illness, infection or injury by checking your temperature regularly, staying warm, getting plenty of rest and drinking lots of fluids.

Talk to your healthcare provider about ways to manage your blood glucose even when you are sick so you can feel better and maintain good diabetes health.