

Diabetes and COVID-19

What is COVID-19?

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a virus that causes respiratory illness. It can spread from person to person.

Common symptoms include: Fever, Cough, Shortness of Breath.

Does having diabetes put you more at risk?

People with diabetes, especially if not well controlled, may be at increased risk of developing severe illness from COVID-19. If you have any other conditions, like heart disease, as well as diabetes, you have more risk of getting seriously ill from COVID-19.

How to protect yourself and stop the spread of infection:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Wash hands before and after checking your blood sugar.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces regularly.
- Stay home as much as possible.
- If necessary to go out in public, keep a 6 foot distance from others.
- Wear a cloth face cover when around others or in public places.

When should you seek immediate medical care?

When developing symptoms of a severe viral infection:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- Bluish lips or face

When experiencing symptoms of high ketones/DKA:

- Vomiting
- Difficulty breathing
- Fruity odor on breath
- Confusion

What to do if you get sick:

- Call our office at (540)433-4913 and let us know your symptoms.
- If you take insulin or have been asked by your provider to check your blood sugar, check it often (every 2-3 hours). *Treat low blood sugars (less than 70 mg/dl) with fast acting carbs like candy or 4 oz. of fruit juice. Recheck blood sugar in 15 minutes to ensure it has risen.*
- Do not stop taking your insulin.
- Drink lots of fluids and stay hydrated.
- Treat underlying illness and symptoms as instructed by your health care team. Some over-the-counter cold medicines can affect blood sugar levels. *Syrups that contain sugar and decongestants can raise blood sugar. Look for pills that have the same ingredients, these are often a better choice.*

What else can I do to protect my health?

Getting your yearly influenza vaccine can also protect from unwanted illnesses. Contracting both the flu and COVID-19 (at the same time or even spread apart) could be detrimental to most persons, but especially for high risk persons, such as those with diabetes.