



Diabetes Newsletter: Winter 2020

How to manage sick days during cold and flu season

Everyone hopes to make it through cold/flu season without coming into contact with the nasty bugs. In past winter issues we have discussed how hand-washing, proper cough etiquette and the flu shot are effective ways to prevent contracting respiratory illnesses. However, there are times, when our best efforts are thwarted. On those days, when you just do not want to get out of bed—how can diabetes best be managed?



First—avoid dehydration. When vomiting, having diarrhea or even constant coughing, your body is at greater need of hydration. Remember to drink plenty of fluids with minimal sugar (unless you have been told to limit fluids). Examples are clear soups, broth, water, watered down juice or electrolyte replacement such as Gastrolyte—not Gatorade, which is very sweet.

Avoid caffeine which can cause further dehydration

Second—if you are unable to eat usual foods try the following to avoid hypoglycemia: toast, jello, popsicles, or applesauce. **Third**—it is important to seek the advice of your doctor or pharmacist regarding which medications to continue and which may need to be stopped. *Call 811* anytime if your usual healthcare team is unavailable.



Lastly—monitor your blood sugar more often than usual. Illness can cause great changes in blood sugar, sometimes in ways that are unexpected!

Hopefully you are able to avoid illness this season. But if not, consider these tips and get plenty of rest!



Five easy ways to eat more veggies (that's not salad)!

It's that time of year again—new year, new resolutions! Instead of cutting back on certain foods, why not make it a goal to have MORE of something?

Easier said than done, your dietitian has likely advised you to bump up your veggies to half your plate. Here are five tips to make that as easy as possible!

ONE. Add 2 handfuls of leafy greens to your morning smoothie. If you're just starting, spinach is milder in flavour, but kale, beet greens, and chard are great options to mix it up. Add no more than 1 cup of fruit to brighten the flavours. For savoury breakfast eaters, pack your omelettes with sautéed spinach, mushrooms and onions!

TWO. Make a veggie-packed tomato sauce with mashed butternut squash, or diced zucchini, carrots, red peppers, and celery.

THREE. Bulk up your homemade or canned soups and stews with tomatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, or leafy greens.

FOUR. Substitute half your ground meat in burger patties, shepherd's pie or taco filling with minced mushrooms, carrots and peas!

FIVE. Pre-wash and cut cucumbers and bell peppers and keep them at eye-level in the fridge for an easy grab-and-go snack!



How to winterize your foot care! Checklist of things to do!

Checklist

- * Check your feet daily for any cuts, cracks (gets bad during the winters), bruises, blisters, sores, infection, and differences between the two feet!
- * Wash and dry your feet each day, and especially between the toes!
- * Moisturizes your feet by applying lotion as needed (but NEVER between the toes).
- * Wear diabetic socks. They can help you wick away sweat after a long day in a waterproof boot!
- * Trim your nails straight across.
- * Avoid any direct heating element to feet. You may get burnt without knowing.
- * Use a mirror to check the bottom of your feet if you can't reach!

Why do all that when all you want to do is keep your socks on and keep warm? Wearing socks is good enough right?

This is more important than ever during winter! Since it's cold and



damp, all you want is to cover your feet. But by looking everyday, you may just catch things (i.e. dry and crack skin) you wouldn't have otherwise!

As they say "*an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.*"

What to do if you do notice issues to your feet during your daily foot hygiene.

Clean any cut or scratch with mild soap and water, then apply a dressing to protect it. You should check in with your family doctor if the injury does not improve in a day or two and especially if redness, swelling or pain develops.

If you need some general assistance with your foot care. There are foot care nurses that can assist you:
Lower Mainland Foot Care Nurses Association

<https://www.lmfna.ca/members/#directory/map/order>