



# High blood sugar (Hyperglycemia)

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## What is high blood sugar?

A high blood sugar level is when the amount of sugar in your blood is higher than your target level. High blood sugar is also called hyperglycemia.

## What causes high blood sugar?

High blood sugar can be caused by:

- missing your diabetes medication
- taking too little diabetes medication
- eating too much, especially foods high in carbohydrates
- being sick or under stress
- side effects from other medications

## What are the signs of high blood sugar?

When your blood sugar level is high, you may:

- be thirsty, have a dry mouth and skin
- urinate more often
- feel tired or weak
- feel hunger or nausea
- have stomach pains or cramps

People with Type 1 diabetes may also have fruity smelling breath. It may also smell like acetone or nail polish remover.

## What do I do if I have high blood sugar?

- Test your blood sugar level every 4 hours.
- Drink sugar free fluids such as water or diet pop.
- If you have Type 2 diabetes, an activity such as walking may help to lower your blood sugar.
- If you have Type 1 diabetes and your blood sugar is above 14.0 mmol/L, then do not do any activity. Check your blood for ketones.

## What are ketones?

If you have Type 1 diabetes, ketones develop when your body does not have enough insulin to use sugar for energy. Instead, your body breaks down stored fat for energy and ketones are made as a result.

Ketones can make you very sick. If your blood sugar is high because you are sick, the build up of ketones can make your illness worse.

If you have Type 1 diabetes you always need to take insulin. When you are sick, you may need to take more insulin and test for ketones more often. Ask your health care provider about how to test for ketones.

## What do I do if my blood sugar remains high?

- Test your blood sugar more often. Your health care provider will help you decide how often to test.
- Drink more water or other sugar free fluids – as long as you have not been told otherwise by your health care provider.

If your blood sugar remains high, you may need to call your health care provider to:

- adjust your diabetes pills, insulin or both
- adjust your meal plan