

Diabetes

Managing Diabetes During Your Stay

Keeping your blood sugar under control takes careful attention. To help, make a diabetes care plan with your doctor or nurse. Include information like:

- ◆ how often your blood sugar needs to be checked
- ◆ how often you need to take your medicines and insulin
- ◆ what to do if you can't eat
- ◆ how to handle your insulin pump if you have one

You also may want to ask a friend or family member to be your diabetes advocate. Together you can work with hospital staff to follow your diabetes care plan.

Tracking Your Blood Sugar

Tracking your blood sugar can give you valuable information about how your body's working. It also can help you make adjustments if your numbers are generally too high or too low. Being sick and taking new medicines can cause your blood sugar numbers to go up or down. Ask your nurse if your blood sugar needs to be tested more often.

Taking Medicine or Insulin

You'll still need your medicines and insulin (if you take it) while in the hospital, but do not take them yourself. Your nursing staff will be responsible for giving them to you. If you have questions about your schedule, it's okay to ask.

Avoid Infections

Having diabetes puts you at a higher risk of getting an infection, so it's important to be extra careful during your hospital stay:

- ◆ Ask everyone who comes in your room to wash his or her hands.
- ◆ Wash your own hands when you can, or ask for hand sanitizer to be placed near your bed.
- ◆ Tell your nurse about any cuts, sores or bruises you have.
- ◆ Ask friends and family who aren't feeling well to stay home.

Planning for Meals

Once you're admitted to the hospital, ask if there's a special meal plan for patients with diabetes. You also can ask to see the hospital's dietitian if your blood sugar is too high or too low during your stay.

If you need to take medicine or insulin before your meal, make sure you've worked out a schedule with your nurse.

Insulin and Food

If you take rapid-acting insulin before meals, ask your nurse to help make sure you have your food before she gives you the insulin. Don't let anyone give you rapid-acting insulin if your food hasn't arrived.

