

### **Am I at higher risk of COVID-19?**

- COVID-19 can cause more severe symptoms and complications in some people living with diabetes. There is greater risk is for individuals with older age and other chronic conditions such as heart disease & lung disease.
- Most studies so far suggest people living with diabetes that is under **good control** are not at higher risk of COVID. If, however, they come down with COVID it may have a worse course and require hospitalization.
- Checking blood glucose often and checking for blood ketones and treating according to guidelines from Charles H. Best Centre can help to avoid hospitalization. Please ensure you have the tools you need to check and manage ketones, and if you don't to reach out to your educator. (see below)

### **Can I go outside?**

- Yes, as long as you are not having symptoms and able to keep physical distance from others (2 metres), you can go outside for a walk to get fresh air.
- When you leave the house to get supplies/groceries, or if you need to go to your place of work:
  - o Frequently wash your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer for at least 20 seconds.
  - o Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
  - o Keep physical distance 2 metres from others.
  - o Change your clothes and wash your hands when you return home.
  - o Talk to your employer if you have concerns exposure at your workplace.

### **What do I do if I think I have COVID?**

- The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, and dry cough. Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea. See "COVID self-assessment" link below to review your symptoms.
- Stay at home if you feel unwell.
- Check your blood sugars more often and check blood ketones. Reach out to your educator or physician if you need assistance managing your blood sugars.
- If you have difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance. If you are unsure if you need to go to hospital, Call Public Health Durham 905-668-7711, or Telehealth Ontario 1-866-797-0000

### **What can I do to prepare?**

- Ensure you have enough sick day supplies, ketone meter and blood ketone strips (that are not expired), and Preventing Ketoacidosis handout (you can access this on the Charles H. Best Centre website through the patient portal).

- Have enough diabetes supplies for one-two weeks in case you cannot get to the pharmacy to refill your prescriptions (i.e. insulin, test strips, pump supplies, meter/pump batteries, sources of fast-acting sugar for low treatments).
- Have glucagon available in case of a low blood sugar.

**Resources:**

Diabetes Canada, COVID FAQs :

<https://www.diabetes.ca/resources/tools---resources/faq-about-covid-19-and-diabetes>

COVID self-assessment:

<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment>

Taking Care of Your Diabetes:

<http://www.tcoyd.org>

Diabetes Disaster Response Coalition - Diabetes Management and Preparedness

<https://www.diabetesdisasterresponse.org/covid19update>

World Health Organization – Coronavirus Q & A

<https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>