

# Stay well this winter

**A handy guide.**

Supported by

**DIABETES UK**

## **Get ready for winter.**

Winter conditions can be seriously bad for your health, especially if you're living with diabetes. Illnesses like cold and flu can be more severe and can make it harder to manage your diabetes. However, as you'll see in this handy guide, there are lots of things you can do to stay well this winter.

## **Get your flu vaccination.**

Living with diabetes means that if you get the flu you're more at risk of complications like pneumonia. That's why it's so important to get your free vaccination now before winter starts. Don't put it off.

**Ask at your GP or pharmacy today.**

## **Feeling unwell? Don't wait.**

Your pharmacist, GP or nurse are there to provide advice when you are feeling unwell. Your blood sugars may rise so don't stop taking any other diabetes treatment. However, if you take an SGLT2 inhibitor tablet, you should stop this when you're not well.

**Speak to your pharmacist, GP or nurse before it becomes serious.**

## **Prescriptions pick-up.**

Make sure you collect your prescription before the Christmas holidays begin. Some GP surgeries and pharmacies may be closed over the festive period so it's best to be prepared.

## **Keep warm.**

It is important to keep warm in winter (both inside and outdoors). Heat your home to at least 18°C (65°F). You might prefer your living room to be slightly warmer.

If you are worried about the costs of keeping your house warm, talk to your local energy provider or go online and find out more about the support you're entitled to at [www.gov.uk/phe/keep-warm](http://www.gov.uk/phe/keep-warm)

## **Keep hydrated and eat.**

Being unwell and having diabetes can be made worse if you don't keep your fluids up. Some medications mean you need to eat regularly, so try to eat a little and often. Carbohydrate-based drinks, like milk or juices, may help you manage your blood sugars alongside any medication.

## **Test, test, test.**

Being unwell can cause your blood sugars to go up and down. If you normally test your blood sugar, you may need to do it more often depending on your diabetes treatment. And make sure you talk to your GP or nurse about your own sick day rules.

## **Be prepared.**

Most common winter ailments, such as colds, can't be treated with antibiotics. So, make sure you:

- Rest and drink plenty of fluid.
- Speak to your pharmacist about over-the-counter medicines you should have in stock to help you through the winter season.
- Contact your GP if your symptoms don't improve.

**STAYWELL  
THISWINTER**

For more information and support with managing your diabetes over the winter call **0345 123 2399** or visit [www.diabetes.org.uk/flu](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/flu)