

Medicines and dehydration: your sick-day plan

For adults with kidney disease, diabetes or heart failure

Only pause medicines as individually advised

Follow the advice given by your clinician or pharmacist, verbally or in your AccuRx message. The examples below help you recognise medicines, not choose which to stop. If unsure, contact CHG today; use NHS 111 when closed.

Gliflozin emergency: possible ketoacidosis

If you take a gliflozin, warning signs include:

Stomach pain or vomiting

Fast or deep breathing

Unusual sleepiness or confusion

Fruity-smelling breath

Ketoacidosis is a dangerous acid build-up, even with normal blood glucose.

Stop the gliflozin and get emergency help now: call 999 or go to A&E.

Do not drive yourself. Do not delay help to test ketones.

Medicines that may need a temporary pause

During significant dehydration or acute illness, your clinical team may advise a pause in some of these medicines:

- **ACE inhibitors:** ramipril, lisinopril, perindopril, enalapril
- **ARBs / ARNI:** candesartan, losartan, irbesartan, valsartan, sacubitril/valsartan
- **Water tablets (diuretics):** furosemide, bumetanide, indapamide, bendroflumethiazide, spironolactone, eplerenone
- **Metformin:** including slow-release metformin
- **SGLT2 inhibitors (gliflozins):** dapagliflozin, empagliflozin, canagliflozin, ertugliflozin
- **Anti-inflammatory painkillers (NSAIDs):** ibuprofen, naproxen, diclofenac tablets or capsules

These medicines can also be in combination tablets. Keep the message naming your medicines. If advice was verbal, ask for written confirmation.

If you become unwell

A mild cold with normal eating and drinking is not usually a reason to pause medicines. Vomiting, diarrhoea or fever can cause dehydration, especially with sweating or poor intake.

Contact CHG the same day

Vomiting, diarrhoea, fever, drinking too little or signs of dehydration? Unsure whether to pause a medicine? Contact CHG today and ask to speak to the clinical team.

Use NHS 111 when closed, including weekends, or if urgent advice is not available promptly. Do not wait until Monday.



During the illness

- Follow your named medicine advice and its illness triggers. Follow your individual restart advice too under “Restarting your medicines”. The gliflozin emergency instruction is at the start of this leaflet.
- Take small, regular sips. Follow any fluid restriction; do not force extra drinks.
- With diabetes, follow your sick-day plan. Check glucose more often and ketones as advised. Seek urgent advice for results outside your plan, even if you feel well.
- Gliclazide or glimepiride can cause low blood sugar when eating less. Follow your diabetes plan or seek dose advice; do not choose a pause yourself.
- With gliflozins, blood ketone tests are preferred. Urine tests can be less reliable. Do not delay urgent help to get a meter.
- Avoid buying ibuprofen, naproxen or diclofenac tablets while dehydrated. Check cold, flu and pain products for these ingredients. If prescribed, seek same-day pause advice. Paracetamol may be suitable. Continue prescribed low-dose aspirin unless advised otherwise.

Do not stop these without specific advice

Insulin: never stop it as a sick-day measure, even if not eating. Follow your diabetes plan or get urgent dose advice.

Steroid tablets: do not stop suddenly. Follow your steroid sick-day plan and carry your emergency card if issued. If tablets will not stay down, seek urgent help; an injection may be needed. Follow any prescribed emergency injection plan.

Transplant anti-rejection medicines: do not stop. Contact your transplant team promptly if unwell or unable to keep them down.

Heart failure or a fluid restriction

Do not automatically stop a water tablet. Follow your individual advice and usual fluid limit. Get same-day advice for increasing breathlessness, swelling, breathlessness when lying down or sudden weight gain.

When you need urgent help

Call 999 now

Call 999 for severe breathing difficulty, collapse, a seizure, or if someone is very confused, very drowsy or hard to wake. Follow the gliflozin warning at the start of this leaflet when relevant.

Seek urgent advice from CHG or NHS 111 if you cannot keep fluids down, pass much less urine, feel faint or unusually weak, or are getting worse. Do not wait 24 to 48 hours for advice. Contact the team again if still unwell after that time.

Seek help early if pregnant, frail, or living with advanced kidney disease or a transplant.

Restarting your medicines

- Follow your individual restart advice. Usually, restart after eating and drinking normally for 24 to 48 hours and when no longer acutely unwell.
- Take the usual dose at the next usual time. Do not take extra doses for those missed.
- Ask CHG before restarting after acute kidney injury or hospital admission, or if still passing less urine, having heart-failure symptoms, or told to remain off a medicine.
- After ketoacidosis, do not restart a gliflozin unless your clinical team confirms it is safe. After major surgery or serious illness in hospital, restart only on their advice once stable and ketones are normal.

If you take a gliflozin, make sure your individual sick-day advice covers illness, reduced food intake and dehydration. Avoid ketogenic or very-low-carbohydrate diets. Ask for a plan before fasting.



Why a temporary pause may help

Dehydration can make some medicines unsafe for different reasons: acute kidney injury, worsening dehydration or low blood pressure. Metformin can increase the risk of lactic acidosis, a dangerous acid build-up. Gliflozins can increase dehydration and ketoacidosis risk. Many of these medicines protect your heart or kidneys when well, so restarting safely matters.

Before surgery, procedures, fasting or bowel preparation, ask the hospital team in advance which medicines to pause and when to restart. Show them your medicine list. This leaflet does not replace their instructions.

How to contact CHG

Use the online contact form: cirencesterhealthgroup.co.uk/appointments/

If unable to use it, call 01285 653122 or 01285 653184 and ask for same-day clinical advice. When CHG is closed, including weekends, call 111 or use 111.nhs.uk.

If you need help reading or understanding this leaflet, or need another format, please contact CHG.

The Avenue Surgery: 1 The Avenue, Cirencester, GL7 1EH.

St Peters Road Surgery: 1 St Peters Road, Cirencester, GL7 1RF.