Insulin

Take charge of your diabetes

Medicines for Type 2 Diabetes

Taking Insulin

If your doctor has told you to start or adjust your insulin dose, have him or her complete this section with you.
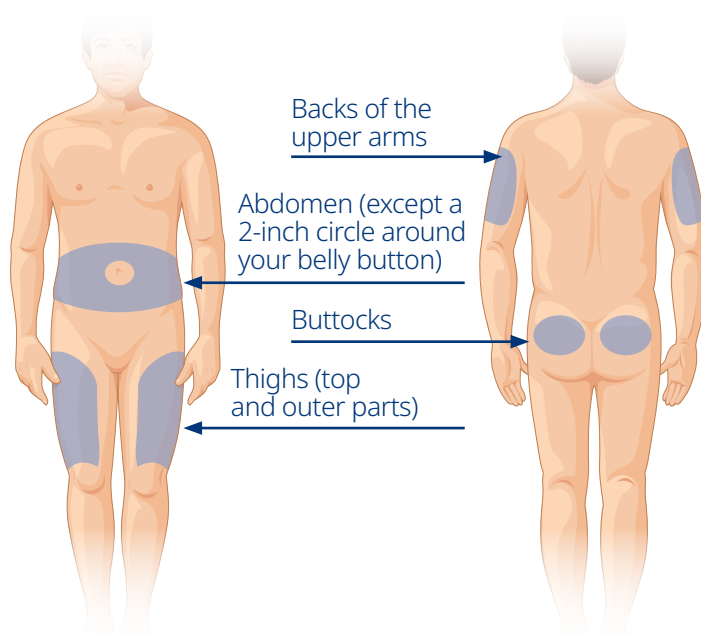
Insulin type:
☐ Long-acting
☐ Mealtime

How to take:
☐ Pen
☐ Vial & syringe
☐ Pump

When to take:
☐ Breakfast
☐ Lunch
☐ Dinner
☐ _____

When to check blood sugar:
☐ Morning
☐ Before lunch
☐ Before dinner
☐ Bedtime

Blood sugar goals:
Fasting _____   After meal (1-2 hours) _____

Where do I inject insulin?

Insulin injections are given in the layer of fat just under the skin in these areas of the body:

Backs of the upper arms

Abdomen (except a 2-inch circle around your belly button)

Buttocks

Thighs (top and outer parts)

Insulin should be injected in the same general area of the body each time. But to avoid lumps or buildup of scar tissue, injections should not be given in the exact same spot each day.

Adjusting Insulin

Long-acting dose adjustments (if needed):

If your morning blood sugar reading is:

If your morning blood sugar reading is:	Then you should:
_____ or less (example: 80 or less)	⊖ Subtract ____ unit(s)
Between _____ and _____ (example: between 81 and 130)	✔ Take the same dose
_____ or more (example: 131 or more)	⊕ Add ____ unit(s)

Do not take more than _____ units without talking to your doctor.

Mealtime dose adjustments (if needed):

If your blood sugar reading is:	Then you should:
_____ or less (example: 80 or less)	⊖ Subtract ____ unit(s)
Between _____ and _____ (example: between 81 and 130)	✔ Take the same dose you took today
_____ or more (example: 131 or more)	⊕ Add ____ unit(s)

To learn more, visit **Cornerstones4Care.com**

Starting Insulin

People with type 1 diabetes have to take insulin to manage their diabetes. However, many people with type 2 diabetes eventually need and benefit from taking insulin.

Starting or adding insulin to your diabetes care plan does not mean that you've done anything wrong in managing your diabetes. It just means that your diabetes has changed over time.

What is insulin?

Insulin is a naturally occurring hormone secreted by your pancreas. If you are prescribed insulin, it may be because:

Your body doesn't produce insulin (type 1 diabetes)

OR

Your body doesn't use it properly (type 2 diabetes)

Insulin cannot be taken as a pill. This is because the acid in your stomach would break it down during digestion, just like the protein in food. So, insulin is usually injected for your body to be able to use it. An inhaled insulin is also available.

How does insulin work?

Taking insulin works like your body's own insulin. It lowers blood sugar by helping sugar move from the blood into your cells.

Insulin has

3 characteristics:

Onset is how long it takes for the insulin to start lowering your blood sugar

Peak is the time period when the insulin is at its maximum strength

Duration is how long the insulin continues to work

What is the difference between mealtime and long-acting insulin?

Each type of insulin helps manage your blood sugar levels. There is not one type that is right for everyone. Each person's insulin need is different. Some people with type 2 diabetes may use two different types of insulin, mealtime insulin and long-acting insulin.

Long-acting insulin

This type of insulin provides steady insulin levels throughout the day and night. It is often taken before bed or first thing in the morning.

Mealtime insulin

This type of insulin covers the blood sugar spikes that happen when you eat. It is usually taken just before a meal. You may start taking mealtime insulin with one meal each day. But over time, you may have to take this type of insulin at additional meals.
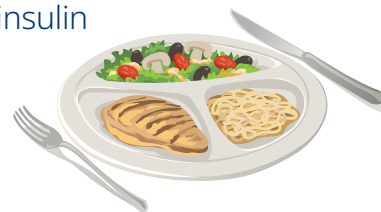
How do I inject insulin?

This may be your first time giving yourself an injection. But your diabetes care team will teach you safe and comfortable ways to inject your insulin. You can inject insulin by using:

An insulin pen

A syringe filled from a bottle of insulin

An insulin pump

Does insulin cause side effects?

One of the most common side effects of insulin is low blood sugar. The American Diabetes Association defines low blood sugar (or hypoglycemia) as when your blood sugar is less than 70 mg/dL. Ask your diabetes care team what low blood sugar is for you.

Treat low blood sugar with the 15-15 rule

- Have 15 to 20 grams of carbohydrates that contain glucose to raise your blood sugar and check it after 15 minutes.

- If it is still low, treatment should be repeated.
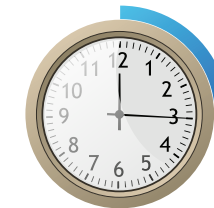
Once your blood sugar returns to normal, have a meal or snack to keep low blood sugar from coming back.

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