

Insulin Therapy



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So You Need to Take Insulin

If your health care provider has recommended that you take insulin in addition to or instead of your oral medication, you may feel upset. But knowing the facts about diabetes and insulin may help you manage your diabetes.

Why Diabetes Pills May No Longer Control Your Blood Sugar

If your diabetes pills are no longer working to control your blood sugar and you need to start taking insulin, this doesn't mean you've failed in any way. There are several reasons why your pills alone may no longer be enough.

- The pills may not get your blood sugar level low enough. Although most people find that their blood glucose levels go down when they take pills, their blood glucose levels may still remain uncontrolled.
- When you first started taking diabetes pills, your body may still have been making insulin—just not enough for your body's needs. But diabetes is a progressive disease. As time passes, your body makes less and less insulin, so your pills alone may not be enough to control your blood sugar.

Taking Insulin

Many people with diabetes may eventually need to take insulin to achieve and maintain good control of their blood sugar. You are not alone. Insulin shots, along with the right balance of diet, exercise, and other diabetes medications, may help you manage your diabetes.

Taking insulin may help you gain better control of your blood sugar levels by helping your body use glucose for energy.

- Insulin shots may not be as painful as you think. Insulin needles are very small in order to minimize discomfort.
- There are numerous delivery options for taking your insulin.

Talk to your health care provider about whether insulin is right for you. Remember, insulin is only a part of treating diabetes. Following a meal plan, staying active, regularly checking your blood sugar levels, and taking all diabetes medications as prescribed are also all important steps.



Important Things to Know About Taking Insulin

- 1. It's not your fault.**
- 2. It's not as hard as you think.**
- 3. It may help you control your blood sugar!**

This health information is being provided for general educational purposes only. Your health care provider is the single best source of information regarding your health. Please consult your health care provider if you have any questions about your health or treatment.



Insulin Therapy

Here are some questions about your insulin treatment that should be answered before you start. Write down the answers you receive from your health care provider.

GENERAL	Why do I need insulin?	
	How long does insulin take to work and how long does it stay in my body?	
	Can I take my insulin with the other prescription or nonprescription medications, vitamins, supplements, or herbal products I am currently taking?	
	Are there any special dietary instructions I should follow?	
	What should I do if I forget a dose?	
	What should I do if I get sick?	
	What side effects can insulin cause?	
INJECTION	What time(s) of day should I give myself a shot?	
	Should I eat before or after my insulin shot?	
	Do I need to mix my insulin? If so, how?	
	How much insulin do I need for each injection and how do I measure the right amount?	
	Where on my body should I inject the insulin?	
	Do I inject at the same spot every time?	
	How do I give myself an insulin injection?	
SUPPLIES	What type of container will my insulin come in and what other supplies (needles, syringes, pens) will I need?	
	How long can I use the insulin bottle or insulin pen?	
	Can I reuse my insulin supplies?	
	How do I safely throw away my used supplies?	
	Where should I store my insulin?	

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