



Insulin Treatment for Type 2 Diabetes: The Basics

If you have type 2 diabetes, your body either does not make enough insulin or makes insulin but does not know how to use it the right way. If your body cannot use insulin correctly, you may need to take insulin injections. Here is what you need to know if your healthcare provider has prescribed insulin for you.

- A few types of insulin are available: they are different because of the time that they take to lower your blood glucose and how long they last in your bloodstream.
- Insulin comes in 2 forms: a vial, from which you take insulin up into a syringe to inject your dose, or a pen device that is already filled with insulin.
- Insulin is injected, or inserted, into the fat under your skin using a syringe or a pen, which both have a thin needle. Insulin can be injected into your stomach, upper arm, upper leg, or buttocks: talk to your healthcare provider about where you should inject insulin.



- Because insulin needles are thin, if they are used more than once they can bend: only use your needles once. Needles and syringes should never be shared.
- Many people need insulin injections several times each day. Checking your blood glucose tells you about your insulin dose so ask your healthcare provider what time is best to check and how much insulin you should use.
- Keep the vial of insulin or insulin pen you are using at room temperature. Ask your pharmacist how long you can keep the insulin you take at room temperature. Store your unopened insulin in the refrigerator. Unopened insulin can be used until the expiration date listed on the box. Do not freeze insulin.
- Insulin doses change with the seasons, when you are ill, or when you gain or lose weight. If your healthcare provider tells you to take more insulin, it does not mean that your type 2 diabetes is getting worse.



Be sure to talk with your healthcare provider about any questions or concerns that you have about taking insulin for your type 2 diabetes. Use the space below to write down questions to ask your healthcare provider at your next visit.



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FOR MORE INFORMATION:
TALK TO YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER
OR VISIT WWW.NDEI.ORG

REFERENCES: American Diabetes Association. Insulin basics. Available at: <http://www.diabetes.org/living-with-diabetes/treatment-and-care/medication/insulin/insulin-basics.html>. • Mayo Clinic. Diabetes treatment: using insulin to manage blood sugar. Available at: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/diabetes-treatment/DA00010>. • MedlinePlus. Insulin injection. Available at: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/meds/a682611.html>. All websites accessed November 6, 2013.