

Insulin Therapy



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 injections 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 with 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.



Myths and Facts About Diabetes and Insulin

It is not always easy to separate myths from facts, especially when it comes to your health. But knowing the truth about diabetes and insulin may help you manage your blood sugar. This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Only your health care provider can diagnose and treat a medical problem.

Myth 1: Insulin will make me gain a lot of weight.

Fact: People may put on weight when they start taking insulin because it causes the body to store calories from food. Following a meal and exercise plan may help keep you from gaining a lot of excess weight.

Myth 2: Taking insulin means I've failed with pills or my diabetes is getting worse.

Fact: Diabetes is a progressive disease. Over time, some people who start on pills may need to add insulin or a combination therapy later to help control their blood sugar. Everyone's body is different. Your health care provider can tell you what will work best for you.

Myth 3: Injecting insulin is very painful and will interfere with my schedule.

Fact: The insulin needle is small and thin. Insulin is injected into the fatty layer just under the skin, where there are fewer nerve endings. Many patients taking insulin say it has become a part of their daily routine.

Myth 4: Insulin is addictive.

Fact: Insulin is not addictive like narcotics. It replaces a hormone your body once made naturally.

If your blood sugar is too low, **Here are some tips to raise it quickly**

- 3 to 4 glucose tablets—at least 15-20 grams are needed. Note: this is a good, quick source of glucose.
- ½ cup (4 oz) of juice or regular soda (not diet)
- 2 tablespoons of raisins
- 8 ounces of nonfat or 1% milk
- Hard candies, jellybeans, or gumdrops (see package to determine servings size)
- 1 tablespoon of honey, sugar, or corn syrup