

Getting started with insulin injections

Supplies – what will I need?

- ☐ My insulin prescription
- ☐ Pen needles
- ☐ Sharps container
- ☐ Blood sugar meter & testing strips
- ☐ Lancing device and lancets



- ❖ Never put used needles into the garbage
- ❖ Ask your pharmacist for a free '**sharps container**'
- ❖ When full, return the container to your pharmacist for disposal

Where do I store my insulin?

- Always keep your insulin pens in the fridge until a new one is ready to be used
- Take your insulin pen out of the fridge for a few hours before you start using it
- Once you start using your insulin pen, it can be kept at room temperature, usually for 30 days - check the instructions inside your insulin box for the exact length of time your insulin can stay at room temperature

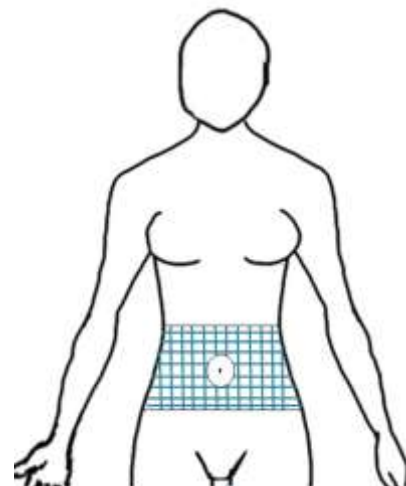


- ❖ Keep your insulin away from direct sunlight and hot temperatures
- ❖ Never let your insulin freeze. Do not use frozen insulin, even once thawed.

Where can I inject my insulin?

Abdomen (your 'belly'):

- Anywhere below your rib bone and above your hip bone
- You can also use your sides! All the way to the seams of your shirt (the love handle area)
- Do not inject in your bellybutton or within 1 inch of it
- Avoid: scars, birth marks, and stretch marks



How do I inject my insulin?

Step 1: Prime your pen

- Attach the one-time-use needle by screwing it onto the top of your pen.
- Remove both caps covering the needle.
- Dial to 2 units, point the needle away from you and press the plunger. You should see drops of insulin come out of the needle tip. If you don't – repeat this step until you do.

This step is important to make sure there are no air bubbles inside your pen and the pen is working properly.



Step 2: Deliver your dose

- Dial up to your prescribed insulin dose.
- Hold the pen at a 90 degree angle to your body, with your thumb on the plunger. Gently insert the needle under your skin.
- Press the plunger to deliver your insulin dose. Make sure the dial on your pen returns to zero.

You don't have to use force during to inject. The needle should slide under your skin very easily.

Step 3: Finish up

- With the needle still under your skin, count to 10 slowly (10 Mississippi's).
- Remove the needle from the pen by replacing the larger needle cap, and twisting counter-clockwise until it is loose.
- Dispose of the needle in a sharps container.

You are done!

What else is important?

Rotate your sites!

- ❖ Injecting into the same spot repeatedly can cause a lump or hard spot to develop
- ❖ This spot will no longer absorb insulin properly
- ❖ To avoid this, change your injection spot each day
- ❖ Keep track of where you have injected, so you don't use the same spot again for a while

