Get to Know Your Insulin

When you have type 1 diabetes, your body no longer produces insulin. Taking insulin shots helps your body process glucose and move it to your cells and tissues, which need it for energy. This insulin infusion keeps your blood glucose steady, preventing eye, foot, heart and other diabetes complications.

Insulin comes in several different types. Each differs in how quickly it works and how long it lasts. Most people have to use more than one kind to keep blood glucose stable. The chart helps explain how each one works.

Your doctor will let you know what types of insulin you should take, along with:

• **Where to inject insulin.** The most common places are the upper arm, the front or side of the thighs or into the belly.

• **When to take insulin.** People who use rapid-acting insulin normally inject it 15 minutes before they eat. Those who use regular insulin may have to plan ahead to eat 30 to 60 minutes later.

• **How often to take insulin.** Most people with type 1 diabetes need at least two injections per day.

• **Whether you can use alternatives to needles.** These include insulin pens or pumps that inject insulin continuously.

### Your Insulin Cheat Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF INSULIN</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>BEGINS WORKING AFTER</th>
<th>WORKS HARDEST AT</th>
<th>LASTS</th>
<th>TAKE IT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rapid-acting</td>
<td>Insulin aspart, insulin glulisine, or insulin lispro</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td>30 to 90 minutes</td>
<td>Three to five hours</td>
<td>Right before meals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-acting</td>
<td>Regular</td>
<td>30 to 60 minutes</td>
<td>Two to four hours</td>
<td>Five to eight hours</td>
<td>About 30 to 45 minutes before eating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate-acting</td>
<td>NPH</td>
<td>One to three hours</td>
<td>Eight hours</td>
<td>12 to 16 hours</td>
<td>Morning or before bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-acting</td>
<td>Insulin detemir or insulin glargine</td>
<td>One hour</td>
<td>No one point in time; works continuously</td>
<td>20 to 26 hours</td>
<td>Morning or before bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premixed</td>
<td>Will show percentages of different types of insulin</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>At different times depending on the blend; talk with your doctor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

Follow your doctor’s instructions carefully and keep taking your insulin, even when you feel fine. It doesn’t cure diabetes—but it will help you live a healthy life and control your disease.

 Become informed! Find secure, personalized information about managing your diabetes on our website. Go to www.bcnepa.com and click on “View our health & wellness resources” in the Members section.
Congratulations! You've decided to make a healthy change in your lifestyle. Whether it's quitting smoking, eating healthier or getting regular exercise, you're bound to feel better for it. Yet there will be times when you're tempted to stray from your plans.

By understanding when you're likely to be tempted, you can plan ahead to deal with these situations.

**Know Your Weaknesses**

We've all got weaknesses—there's no use denying it. The key is to know what your weaknesses are, avoid the ones you can and come up with a plan to handle the ones you can't avoid. For example, if you're used to having a cigarette first thing in the morning, go for a walk instead. If the high-fat pastries at your favorite café always call your name, brew your own coffee at home.

It may also help to make a list of all the situations you'll find tempting and come up with a strategy for handling each one.

**Enlist Support**

Spreading the word is important. Tell your friends and family about your lifestyle change and ask for their support. Or better yet, enlist a friend or relative to join you. This will give you added encouragement and make sticking with your plan more enjoyable. If you're looking for even more encouragement, try a local support group. It can help to talk with others who are making the same type of change.

**Reward Yourself**

Consider treating yourself to a reward, such as a new CD or a massage, when you stay on track or meet certain goals. This will give you something to look forward to and help you stay focused. If your goal is to lose weight or make healthier food choices, avoid rewarding yourself with food.

**Be Patient**

Remember, it takes time to break habits and change your behavior. Don't be too hard on yourself if you do give in to temptation every so often. And resist the urge to see small setbacks as a reason to give up. Instead, praise yourself for the progress you've made and try again. It may take time and hard work, but you can do it.

**You Can Overcome Temptation**

**A HELPING HAND: YOUR DIABETES EDUCATOR**

There's a lot to learn about managing diabetes, but a diabetes educator can help you understand and control your disease.

A diabetes educator is a nurse, pharmacist or other health care provider. He or she is a critical part of your health care team. According to the American Association of Diabetes Educators, these professionals receive special training and certification to teach you how to:

- Recognize and treat high or low blood glucose
- Create and follow a diabetes diet
- Use insulin and other diabetes medicines
- Take care of your feet
- Deal with sick days
- Stay healthy during pregnancy
- Cope with your emotions
- Prevent and manage complications of diabetes and common conditions that occur with it, such as high blood pressure

You might meet with a diabetes educator at the hospital, doctor's office, pharmacy or community center. You can even have the meetings in your home. He or she will spend 30 minutes to an hour each session helping you improve your health.

Locate a qualified diabetes educator near you at www.diabeteseducator.org.

Your Health Coach is an expert at advising you on how to stay motivated and tackle temptation when you're making lifestyle changes. Call 866-262-4764 weekdays between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m.
Missing Sleep Can Be Bad for Your Diabetes

Tossing and turning night after night can give you more than a bad case of bedhead. Not getting enough sleep could make it harder to control your diabetes. One study in the journal Diabetes Care found people with type 2 diabetes and insomnia also had:

- 23 percent higher fasting glucose levels
- 48 percent higher fasting insulin levels

These differences could leave people with insomnia at risk for diabetes complications, including nerve damage, vision problems and kidney disease.

The Sleep-Health Connection

Sleep is more than a break from our daily activities. While you slumber, your body and brain carry out tasks essential for physical and mental health. Doctors think insomnia also causes your body to release stress hormones. When you’re under pressure, your body releases glucose into the blood to give you energy.

About one-third of adults with type 1 diabetes and more than half with type 2 diabetes regularly have difficulty sleeping. Getting less than eight hours of sleep has been linked to obesity, high blood pressure and heart disease.

Get a Good Night’s Rest

Most adults need between seven and nine hours of sleep for good health. Try these tips to drift off to dreamland:

- **Exercise.** Regular workouts can improve sleep. But stop within three hours of bedtime to give your heart rate a chance to decrease.
- **Follow a regular schedule.** Go to sleep and get up at about the same time, even on the weekends.
- **Avoid food and drinks with caffeine,** such as coffee and chocolate, late in the day.
- **Don’t read or watch TV in bed.** Use your bedroom only for sleeping.

Talk with your doctor if you regularly have trouble falling or staying asleep, you feel very sleepy during the day or you snore loudly. You may have a sleep disorder that needs treatment.

A1c TEST HELPS YOU MANAGE DIABETES

The glucose tests you do day in and day out tell you what your blood sugar is at that moment. The results can help you learn how food, physical activity and stress affect your blood sugar control. If you use insulin, daily tests help you adjust your dosage.

The A1c blood test, on the other hand, measures your blood sugar control for the past two or three months. Think of your A1c level as a kind of average.

The A1c works by testing a protein that links up with sugar in your red blood cells. If your blood sugar was high last week but back under control this week, your red blood cells still carry the “memory” of last week’s high level.

For people with diabetes, doctors usually set an A1c target of 7 percent or lower. A1c levels can range from about 5 percent in someone who doesn’t have diabetes to as much as 25 percent in a person whose diabetes has been out of control for a long period. When your A1c levels stay too high for too long, you can suffer damage of the heart, kidneys, eyes or nerves.

Your A1c should be tested two to four times a year. How often you need the test depends on how well your blood sugar is managed and whether you’ve recently changed diabetes medications.

Remember: You still need to check your blood sugar daily—don’t skip that step and rely only on your A1c tests.
Leo Hartz, MD  
Vice President, Clinical Advocacy,  
and Chief Medical Officer  

BlueCare HMO/HMO Plus: This managed care plan may not cover all your health care expenses. Read your contract carefully to determine which health care services are covered. 800-822-8753.  

Please note that your self-funded group benefits may differ from the benefits and services described herein. Consult your Summary Plan Description for complete details of your program.  

This material is not intended as medical advice. Please talk with your doctor about this and any other health information.

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Call 866-262-4764 or (TTY) 877-720-7771 weekdays between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. EST to speak with a Health Coach.  

Look in this newsletter to find health information especially for you!

Dodge Fructose in Sweetened Drinks  

Fructose is one of many naturally occurring sugars. It’s found in fruits and vegetables and in table sugar, or sucrose. It’s added to corn syrup, too, to make high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS). All three—fructose, sucrose and HFCS—may be used to sweeten beverages, like sodas, fruit drinks and smoothies, or the flavored syrups used in drinks like specialty coffees.  

Drinks sweetened with fructose can increase the risk for metabolic syndrome in overweight or obese people and may increase the risk for cardiovascular disease. So it’s important to choose your beverages just as thoughtfully as you choose your foods.  

Here are some simple ways to quench your thirst while limiting your fructose intake:  
• Flavor regular or seltzer water with a slice of lemon, lime, orange, cucumber or watermelon, or a splash of 100 percent fruit juice.  
• Drink unsweetened iced tea. Make your own with flavorful herbal teas, like refreshing peppermint.  
• Have a glass of low-fat or fat-free milk.  
• Skip flavored syrups, like vanilla, in your coffee drink. Add a little artificial sweetener instead.  
• Ask for no added sugar when you order a smoothie.