



Post Initiation

Welcome to Your Insulin Therapy Journey

Your Guide to Starting Insulin

You've taken an important step to manage your diabetes. This guide will help you feel more confident and safe as you begin insulin therapy.

1. What Is Insulin?

Insulin is a hormone that helps your body use sugar (glucose) from food for energy.

If your body doesn't make enough insulin, or doesn't use it properly, your blood sugar can get too high.

Insulin therapy helps bring your blood sugar down to a healthy level.

2. How to Give Yourself Insulin

Learning how to give yourself insulin is an important part of managing your diabetes. Follow these steps:

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
2. Check your insulin type and dose.
3. Attach a new needle to the end of the insulin by screwing it clockwise until it firmly attached
4. Remove the out cap of the needle and any other cap to expose the needle.
5. Using the dial and the end of the pen, rotate to 2 appears and aligns with the mark on the pen.
6. Place the pen with the needle attached vertically with the needle pointing upwards.

7. Push the pen (opposite end to the needle).

You should see a small squirt or bubble appear at the end of needle. If you do not, repeat the process of dialling in to 2 again.

8. You can now use the dial again to turn to the dose your doctor or nurse has agreed to.

9. Choose where to inject: tummy, thigh, or upper arm.

10. Clean the skin with an alcohol wipe if visibly soiled

11. Insert the needle straight in (90 degrees) and press the plunger.

12. Throw the needle away in a sharps bin.

13. Change where you inject each time to avoid sore spots.

Need help? Watch our video guide [here](#)



3. Your Insulin Plan

You may be given:

- Basal insulin – long-acting, taken once or twice a day.
- Mixed insulin – a mix of long and fast-acting insulin, taken before meals.

You'll also get a **personal insulin plan** (called a titration schedule).

This helps you adjust your dose based on your blood sugar levels.

Your GP will check how you're doing in about 3 months and help you make changes if needed.

4. Checking Your Blood Sugar

It's important to check your blood sugar regularly. This helps you and your GP know if your insulin is working.

You should aim to check your blood sugar before and after meals, especially when adjusting insulin doses.

How to check:

1. Wash your hands.
2. Put a test strip in your meter.
3. Prick your finger with the lancet.
4. Touch the blood to the strip.
5. Read the number on the screen.
6. Throw away the strip and lancet in your sharps bin.

Keep a record of your results in a notebook or app.

5. Risks and Benefits of Insulin

Benefits:

- Helps lower your blood sugar.
- Reduces the risk of diabetes complications.
- Helps you feel better and more in control.

Risks:

- Low blood sugar (hypoglycaemia): You may feel shaky, sweaty, dizzy, or confused.

Always carry something sugary like glucose tablets or juice.

- Sore injection sites: Change where you inject to avoid redness or swelling.
- Weight gain: Some people gain weight. Eating well and staying active can help.



6. What to Do When You're Ill

Being sick can affect your blood sugar. Follow these steps:

- Keep taking your insulin, even if you're not eating normally.
- Check your blood sugar more often.
- Drink plenty of fluids (avoid sugary drinks).
- Call your GP or the clinic if your blood sugar is high or you're unsure what to do.

7. Driving and Insulin

Insulin can affect your ability to drive, especially if your blood sugar is low.

Before driving:

- Check your blood sugar.
- If it's below 5 mmol/L, eat or drink something sugary.
- Always carry glucose tablets or snacks.
- Don't drive if you feel unwell or your blood sugar is too low.

Follow UK driving rules for people with diabetes.

8. What Happens Next

You'll have a blood test in about 3 months to check how well your insulin is working.

Your GP will help you adjust your dose if needed.

Contact your GP or the clinic if:

- You're having trouble with insulin.
- You're getting low blood sugar often.
- You're unsure how to adjust your dose.

Thank You

You've taken a big step to improve your health. We're here to support you.

If you have questions or need help, please get in touch.

Remember:

- Bring your insulin pen and meter to your follow-up appointment.
- Keep a record of your blood sugar and share it with your GP.
- Always carry something sugary in case of low blood sugar.

