



Using an Insulin Pen

Your healthcare practitioner may recommend that you inject insulin using an insulin pen to help control your blood sugar level. Injecting insulin with a pen involves choosing an injection site, preparing and priming your pen, and then injecting the insulin into your body. Your healthcare practitioner will tell you what type of insulin you need, as well as when and how much you need to inject.

Types of Insulin Pens

Some pens come prefilled with insulin and are disposable. When the insulin runs out, you can throw the pen away.

Other pens are reusable and come with an insulin cartridge that you load into the pen before using it.

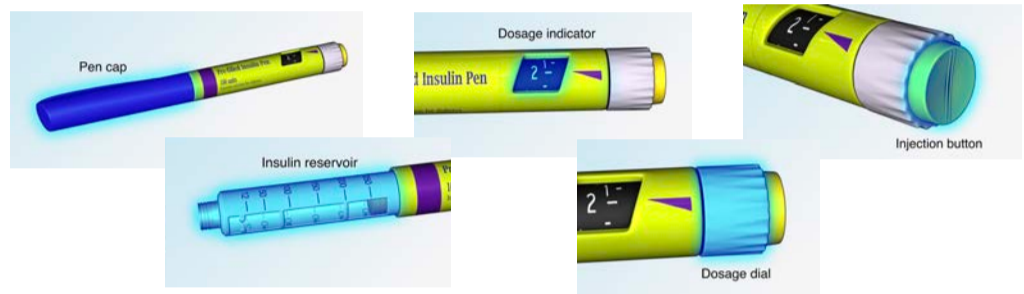
One type of reusable pen called the smart insulin pen can help you manage insulin delivery. Smart insulin pens work with an app on your smartphone that can calculate and track your doses and send you alerts, reminders, and reports.

Things You Will Need:

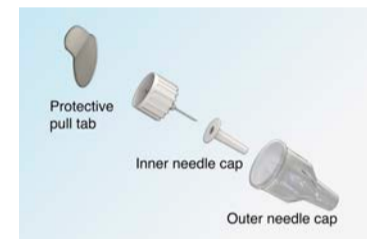
- Alcohol wipes
- Insulin pen
- A new needle for each injection
- Sharps disposal container

Parts of an Insulin Pen

A disposable, prefilled insulin pen has a pen cap, insulin reservoir, dosage indicator, dosage dial, and injection button.



Insulin pen needles have a protective pull tab and an outer and inner needle cap.

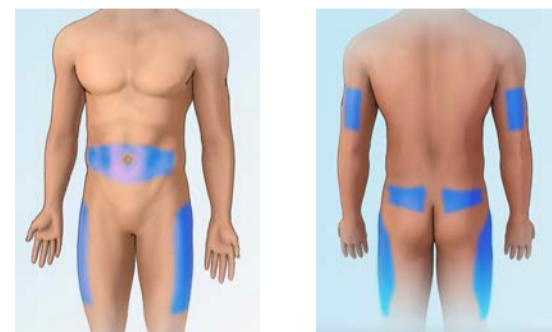


Follow the instructions that came with your insulin pen.

Selecting the Injection Site

Before injecting your insulin, select the injection site on your body. The areas for insulin injection include:

- The abdomen or belly
- The thighs
- The back of the upper arms
- The buttocks



When selecting the injection site:

- Use a different spot each time you give yourself an injection
- Choose a spot at least one inch away from your last injection site and any scar or mole
- Inject your insulin at least two inches from your belly button

Preparing the Insulin Pen



Step 1
Wash your hands with soap and water and then dry them.



Step 2
Remove the cap from your insulin pen.

Preparing Your Insulin Pen Continued...



Step 3

If your insulin needs to be mixed, gently roll the pen between your hands.



Then, turn your pen up and down ten times. Do not shake your pen because it may cause bubbles to form in your insulin.



Before injecting yourself, make sure the insulin in your pen is:

- The type your healthcare practitioner prescribed
- Not past the expiration date
- Not discolored
- Free of clumps



Step 4

Use an alcohol wipe to clean the end of the pen where the needle attaches.

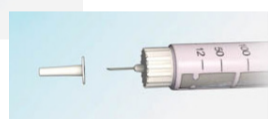


Step 5

Remove the pull-tab from the needle.



Be sure to use a new needle each time you inject insulin.



Step 6

With the outer and inner needle caps still in place, attach the needle to your pen according to the instructions.

Remove both the outer and inner needle caps.



Do not:

- Touch the needle
- Allow it to touch any surface
- Use the needle if it is bent. A bent needle can block or prevent the insulin from coming out

Priming the Insulin Pen

Priming the insulin pen replaces the air in the needle with insulin and removes any clogs or blockages. This ensures that you receive all of the insulin you intend to inject.



Step 1

Turn the dosage dial until you see two units displayed in the dosage indicator.



Step 2

Hold the pen with the needle pointing up. Gently tap the end of the pen near the needle two or three times.



Step 3

Press the injection button all the way in until a drop of insulin appears on the tip of the needle.



You may need to repeat steps 1 through 3 before seeing insulin appear on the tip of the needle.

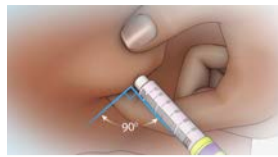


If you need to set your pen down, make sure the needle does not touch anything.

Injecting the Insulin



Step 1
Turn the dosage dial to the number of insulin units you need to inject.



Step 5
Quickly insert the pen's needle straight into your skin at a 90-degree angle. Make sure the whole needle enters your skin.



Step 2
Clean your injection site with an alcohol wipe. Use a circular motion to clean a spot about two inches wide.



Step 6
Push the pen's injection button all the way down to inject the insulin into the fat tissue beneath your skin. Slowly count to ten before removing the needle to make sure you injected all of the insulin.



Step 3
If you replaced your pen's inner needle cap, remove it now.



Step 7
Pull the needle straight out to remove it.



Step 4
You may need to pinch a fold of skin in the cleaned injection spot to make sure the needle will only go into the fat layer under your skin. Ask your healthcare practitioner if you need to pinch up skin for your injection.



Step 8
Carefully put the outer cap back onto the needle, and then turn the capped needle to remove it from the pen. Make sure you remove the needle after each injection.



Never store your insulin pen with the needle attached.



Step 9
Throw away the needle into your sharps disposal container or other puncture-proof container.



Never throw your needles directly into the trash.



Contact your healthcare practitioner if:

- You have questions about injecting your insulin
- Your blood sugar level stays above or below your target range

To find out more about how to use an insulin pen, talk to your healthcare practitioner.

The information in this handout is intended to supplement the information you receive from your healthcare practitioner and should never be considered personal medical advice. Always contact your healthcare practitioner with health questions and concerns.