



How insulin can help in type 2 diabetes

Insulin can help you control your blood sugar and improve your long-term health.

Insulin is the best way to help you control your blood sugar if it is still too high with other medications. Your doctor, nurse, diabetes educator, and pharmacist can help you feel confident about using insulin. The information here can help answer some of your questions about starting insulin.

QUESTION	ANSWER
<i>Why do I need insulin?</i>	Diabetes is a progressive disease, so that many people will eventually need to use insulin to keep their blood sugar under control.
<i>Will starting insulin mean I'll lose my sight or develop kidney problems?</i>	No. Reaching your blood sugar target reduces the risk of heart attack, kidney disease, and other diabetes-related complications. Using insulin can help you control your blood sugar better.
<i>How many injections will I have to do every day?</i>	Many patients can control their blood sugar with just one or two insulin injections per day. Adding extra injections at mealtimes may be necessary to control high sugars during the day. Ask your doctor/nurse/diabetes educator to explain the different types of insulin to you.
<i>Is it very painful injecting myself?</i>	Modern insulin needles are very small and thin. The injection site may be moved around to find the place that is most comfortable for you.
<i>Will insulin cause me to gain weight?</i>	Insulin can cause a few pounds of weight gain. But the benefits of insulin are much greater than the risks. Exercise and a healthy diet can help keep weight under control.
<i>How will I know if I am having low blood sugar?</i>	Early signs of low blood sugar can include trembling, clammy skin, palpitations (pounding or fast heart beats), anxiety, confusion, or hunger. Finding the right dose of insulin and other diabetes medications, along with eating right and having a sugary snack handy, can prevent or deal with these symptoms.
<i>How do I reduce the chance of having low blood sugar?</i>	You can reduce the risk of having low blood sugar by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ planning your exercise schedule ✓ not missing meals ✓ regularly measuring your blood sugar levels ✓ avoiding excessive alcohol use
<i>Isn't insulin very expensive?</i>	Some kinds of insulin are expensive, especially if you use insulin pens. However it can be less expensive than other diabetes medications. Ask your doctor which insulin products are the most affordable. Prices vary among pharmacies and depending on your health insurance coverage.



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These are general recommendations only; specific clinical decisions should be made by the treating physician based on an individual patient's clinical condition. These materials were made possible by the PACE Program of the Department of Aging of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Links to references can be found at AlosaHealth.org.