

PATIENT EDUCATION

Insulins

What is Insulin?

Insulin is made by your body. Insulin's job in the body is to help blood sugar move from your blood into your cells. Your body cells need sugar to give you energy. Insulin acts like a key. It opens the door to your bodies' cells so blood sugar can go in and be used. Without the right amount of insulin, too much blood sugar remains in the bloodstream with nowhere to go. This leads to high blood sugar. Insulin is not made in a pill, it must be injected.

How will taking insulin help my blood sugar control?

Insulin injections help by adding to your own insulin supply.

What are the common side effects of insulin?

The most common side effect with taking insulin is low blood sugar reactions. Other possible side effects may be increased hunger and weight gain.

How do most people take this medication?

Insulin is given in an injection (shot). Some people use only one shot a day others will need more. Your doctor will help decide what type of insulin to use and how many shots a day are best for you.

Name of Insulin	Time it starts to work after injection	Time it works best	Time it quits working
Aspart or Lispro <i>Very fast-acting</i>	5-15 minutes	1/2-1 hour	3-4 hours
Regular <i>Fast-acting</i>	30 minutes	2-4 hours	6-8 hours
NPH <i>Long-acting</i>	2-4 hours	6-10 hours	10-18 hours
70/30 <i>combination of fast and long-acting</i>	30-60 minutes	2-12 hours	16-24 hours
Glargine <i>Very long-acting</i>	1-2 hours	24 hours	24 hours

What do I do if I miss a dose?

Call your diabetes team for instructions if you miss your dose of insulin.

Does insulin require any special laboratory tests or monitoring?

Insulin does not require any special lab tests.

How will I know if the medication is working?

Check your blood sugar often at home. This is the best way to know if you are getting the right amount of medicine.

For more information contact:	
Alaska Area Diabetes Team	
4315 Diplomacy Drive, ANC-DIA	Office Phone (907) 729-1125
Anchorage, Alaska 99508	For Appointments (907) 729-1500
http://www.anmc.org/services/diabetes/	Diabetes Pharmacist (907) 729-2164

The Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium and Southcentral Foundation jointly own and manage the Alaska Native Medical Center under the terms of Public Law 105-83. These parent organizations have established a Joint Operating Board to ensure unified operation of health services provided by the Medical Center.

Approved by IHEW 2006

Source: www.uptodate.com, www.pharmacistsletter.com, and Micromedex Patient Information

