

TRAVELLING WITH INSULIN

- Keep all insulin in the cabin in a separate bag.
- Travel with extra insulin in another bag just in case one bag gets lost.
- Always travel with a stamped letter from your doctor explaining the details of your treatment and clinic.
- Always carry a list of your medications with doses and contact details of your clinic.
- Always check your holiday insurance is in date and covers you fully.
- If flying across time zones check with your doctor or diabetes educator about adjusting your insulin doses.

For urgent advice please call:

..... [during working hours]

..... [outside working hours]



INSULIN STORAGE

- Store insulin in the fridge if it is not being used, ideally between 2-8 °C.
- An insulin vial in use may be kept at room temperature (25 °C) up to one month.
- If insulin cannot be stored in a fridge, it should be kept in a cool and dark place.
- Frozen insulin or insulin exposed to high temperatures loses its effectiveness.
- Injecting insulin that is too cold may be more painful.
- Use cold packs if taking your insulin into the heat of the day to protect it, and never put insulin in direct sunlight.
- If the insulin has white lumps visible after mixing, don't use it as it is inactive. This is called 'frosting'.

TIPS TO PREVENT EXPOSURE TO HIGH TEMPERATURES:

- Keep insulin away from cookers & ovens.
- Don't leave your insulin on top of a TV or laptop which may heat up.
- Don't leave insulin in the glove compartment of a car.
- Don't leave insulin on a window sill exposed to the sun.

INJECTING INSULIN



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
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WHEN DO I HAVE TO INJECT?

The insulin I take are:

Day:.....

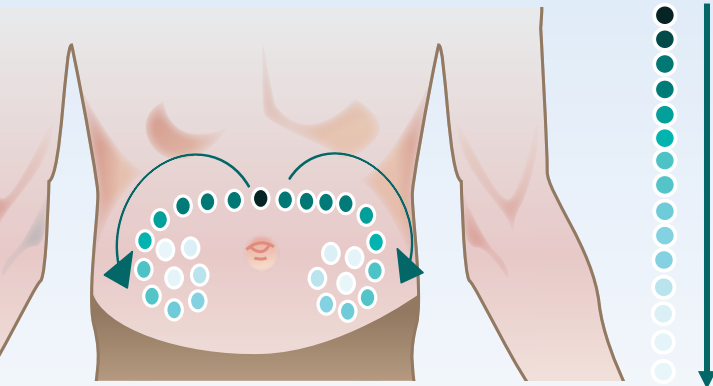
need to take it

Night:

need to take it

WHERE DO I INJECT?

Insulin needs to be injected into the fatty tissue under your skin (subcutaneously). This is the way the insulin is best absorbed.



It is very important that you rotate the injection sites whether on the limb or tummy.

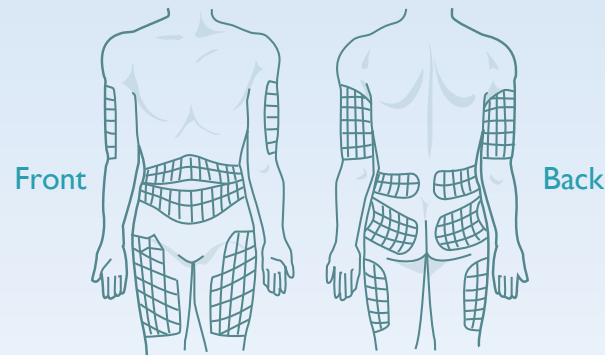
If you do not, fatty deposits will build up causing lumps (lipohypertrophy) which in turn will result:

- Insufficient absorption of the insulin to control your blood sugars
- Undesirable appearance

The sites to choose from are:

- **Arm**, use only the outer back area of the upper arm (where the most fat is). Otherwise, there is a risk of injecting into a muscle which is more painful.

- **Thigh**, stick to the top and the outside area. Stay away from your inner thighs – rubbing between the legs can make the injection site sore. Long acting insulin are best injected here.
- **Buttocks**, you might need a helper as it could be out of your reach. This is also another good choice of site to inject long acting insulin.
- **Tummy**, fast acting insulin are best injected here. Don't do it too near to your bellybutton. The tissue there is tougher and makes the insulin absorption less predictable.



PINCH UP?

The technique is to pinch up fatty tissue away from the muscle. If you are using 6mm, 8mm or 12.7mm needles you should do a fat pinch up.

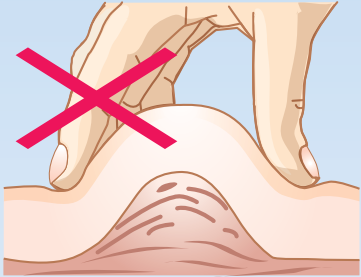
DO:

Use your thumb and two fingers, four fingers width apart, pinch up the fatty skin. This is a fat pinch.



If you are using 5mm needles you should not be pinching up, unless advised by your doctor (small children only).

DON'T:

- Use a narrow pinch, this means you will be injecting the insulin into the muscle which means the insulin will be absorbed more quickly and it will be more painful. 
- Don't inject through clothes.
- Don't use alcohol wipes, this can make the injection sting and will dry out your skin.
- Don't re-use needles.
- Don't inject too close to moles or scars.

CORRECT INJECTION TECHNIQUE

- Prepare your insulin pen or syringe.
- If you are using cloudy insulin, always tip or roll the device 20 times to make sure it is thoroughly mixed.
- If using a pen, ALWAYS do a test shot of one unit to make sure it is working.
- ALWAYS check injection sites for lumpiness, if it is lumpy do not inject there, choose another site.
- Draw up or dial up the dose.
- Do your fat pinch up, and inject at 90 degrees to the skin. If you are a child you may need to give your injection at a different angle. Small children have little fat and may need to inject at a 45 degree angle. If this applies to you, you will be told about this when you see your doctor.
- Push the plunger slowly down until it is all injected.
- Count for 10 seconds and then remove the needle.
- Dispose of your needle/syringe in a sharps box.