

How to Use an Insulin Pen

An insulin pen is one way your child can get the insulin his body needs to control diabetes. In this handout, you will learn how to use an insulin pen. **Read this handout fully before giving your child an injection with an insulin pen.**

WHAT IS INSULIN?

Insulin is a hormone that acts like a key to unlock the cells. It lets **glucose** (sugar) flow out of the blood and into the cells. From there, the body can use glucose for energy.

WHAT IS AN INSULIN PEN?

An **insulin pen** is a tool used to give insulin. It has a needle on one end to inject the insulin into your child's body. Some insulin pens are already filled with insulin. You can fill others with an insulin cartridge. Insulin pens can be disposable or reusable. The care team will help you find an insulin pen that is right for your child.



This is an insulin pen. *Photo courtesy of Pixabay®.*

WHERE CAN I USE THE INSULIN PEN?

You can use the insulin pen in the following places. **Never give insulin through clothing:**

- Upper arms or legs
- Belly
- Buttocks

HOW TO USE AN INSULIN PEN

The insulin pen is only for your child. Do not share the pen with others. Always keep the pen on you. Store unopened insulin in the refrigerator until it is time to use it.

You will need:

- An insulin pen and pen needle
 - 2 alcohol wipes
 - A sharps container
1. Gather your supplies. Make sure the pen has the right insulin.
 2. Wash your hands with soap and water or with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
 3. Remove the cap. Clean the rubber stopper with an alcohol wipe.
 4. Remove the 2 needle coverings – a big, flexible one and the small, harder one. Save the big one for after you give the injection when it is time to remove the needle.
 5. Squeeze the extra air out of the pen by dialing the dose to 2 units. Press the button at the top until the dial reads 0 and a small drop of insulin comes out of the pen.
 6. Turn the dial to your child's insulin dose. Use an alcohol wipe to clean your child's skin where you will give the insulin.
 7. Hold the pen straight above where you will inject the insulin. Pinch his skin, if needed.
 8. Push the needle into the skin. Push the button down at the top of the pen to release insulin until the dial reads 0. Count to 6, then remove the needle.
 9. Keep the button pressed down when you remove the pen from the skin.
 10. Remove the needle by placing the big needle covering back onto the pen. Unscrew the needle and covering. Dispose of the needle safely in the sharps container. Replace the pen cap before storing away.

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