

Learning the Different Types of Insulin

Insulin is a medication used to manage diabetes. It helps to control blood sugar levels. In this handout, you will learn about different types of insulin and how they work.

Every child who has diabetes uses a different type of insulin at a dose that is right for them. The care team will help you figure out which type of insulin and dose is right for your child.

WHAT IS INSULIN?

Insulin is a medication used to manage Type 1 diabetes. In some cases, it can also be used to manage Type 2 diabetes. There are many different types of insulin, including human or regular insulin, long-acting insulin and rapid-acting insulin. Insulin can be given as an injection or through an insulin pump.

TYPES OF INSULIN

Insulin type	Common names	How long it works	How it is given
Human or regular insulin	<i>Humulin®</i> <i>Novolin®</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starts to lower blood sugar within 30-60 minutes (half an hour to one hour) Most active 2-4 hours after injection Works for up to 6-8 hours after injection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Injection or IV Usually given at the hospital if you stay overnight
Intermediate-acting insulins	<i>NPH (Neutral Protamine Hagedorn insulin)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starts to act within 1 ½ - 4 hours Most active 4-12 hours after injection Lasts for up to 24 hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Injection or insulin pen
Long-acting insulin	<i>Insulin glargine (also called Lantus® or Basalgar®)</i> <i>Insulin detemir (also called Levemir®)</i> <i>Insulin degludec (also called Tresiba®)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insulin glargine lasts for up to 24 hours Releases insulin slowly and steadily throughout the day Typically given at bedtime. In some cases, also given in the morning. Insulin degludec can last up to 42 hours. The exact time varies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Injection or insulin pen
Rapid-acting insulin	<i>Lispro (Humalog® or Admelog®)</i> <i>Aspart (Novolog®)</i> <i>Glusilin (Apidra®)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starts to work in 15 minutes Most active 30 minutes to 3 hours after injection Works for up to 3-5 hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through an insulin pump or as an injection

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