

# Starting Your Insulin Treatment Plan

## Why You Need to Take Insulin

Your body needs insulin to change food into energy. With diabetes, your body gradually loses its ability to make insulin. At some point, you need to replace the insulin your body can no longer make. This is just part of having diabetes.

The good news is that new insulins make controlling your diabetes better and easier than ever before. Your health care provider has prescribed an insulin treatment program that matches your needs and lifestyle.

## You Can't Manage What You Don't Measure

Checking your blood is very important. It lets you know quickly when your blood glucose is too high or too low, so you can take fast action.

Recording your results and insulin doses in a logbook also lets you and your health care provider monitor your blood glucose patterns

and make treatment changes as needed.

How often you check depends on your insulin treatment plan. Your provider will tell you when and how often to check.

## Avoid Low Blood Glucose

Low blood glucose (or, hypoglycemia) can happen if you take too much insulin or skip a meal. It can also happen if you eat less than usual without reducing your insulin dose.

Some of the warning signs of low blood glucose are:

- Shakiness, sweatiness, weakness
- Irritability or anxiety
- Numbness or tingling around your lips
- Confusion or inability to think straight

The best way to know if your blood glucose level is within your target range is to test. If your result is

too low, you need to get glucose (sugar) into your bloodstream as soon as possible. If you feel symptoms but can't test, treat anyway.

## When in doubt, treat.

Here are some things you can do to treat low blood glucose:

- Drink 6 oz. fruit juice or 1/2 cup of regular soda.
- Eat 3 glucose tablets or 5 or 6 hard candies

Your provider or dietitian can list other foods for treating lows. Carry at least one with you always.

After treating, wait about 15 minutes and check again. If you're still low, repeat the treatment. When you feel better, be sure to eat your regular meals and snacks as planned.

In most cases, you'll be able to treat lows on your own. However, there are times or situations when your provider will want to know that you are having problems. Be sure to ask about what else you can do to avoid low blood glucose. And find out when you should call if you do have a problem.

## Your Insulin Treatment Plan

Type of insulin	When to take it	How much to take

Your health care provider will complete this section for you.

