

Diabetes Medications: 70/30 Insulin

What is insulin, and what does it do?

Insulin is a medication used to treat diabetes. It is given by shot (injected).

Insulin moves glucose (sugar) out of your blood and into your body's cells. Taking insulin helps lower your blood sugar level and makes it less likely that your diabetes will cause serious problems.

Insulin works best when you follow the rest of your diabetes treatment plan. This means checking your blood sugar regularly, following your meal plan, and exercising every day.

What kind of insulin will I use?

There are many kinds of insulin. Some kinds work right away and don't last very long. Others work more slowly, over a longer period of time.

Your doctor has chosen a kind of insulin for you called 70/30 insulin. This is a mixture of fast- and slow-working medications. 70/30 insulin helps control blood sugar for about 10 to 16 hours, so you only need to take it twice a day.

How do I give myself shots?

- **First, warm the insulin bottle** by holding it in your closed hand for a minute or two. Insulin is easier to mix when it is warm, and the shots will hurt less.
- **Second, it is very important to mix your insulin well.** To do this, roll the bottle between your palms 10 times. Don't shake the vial — just roll it gently.

Gently roll the vial between your palms 10 times to mix the insulin.



- When the insulin is mixed, it will look cloudy or milky. Do **not** use your insulin if it is clear or has little bits of stuff floating in it.

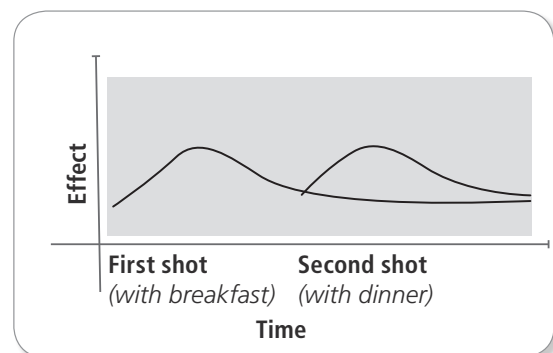
Make sure your insulin looks cloudy or milky before you give yourself a shot.



- Give yourself the shot right after you mix the insulin. Your doctor or a nurse will show you how to do this. You can also take a handout home to remind yourself.

When do I give myself shots?

- Many people who use 70/30 insulin give themselves **one shot at breakfast time and one shot at dinner time.** Your doctor will tell you the best schedule for you. The chart below shows how 70/30 insulin works during the day and all night.
- By giving yourself a shot in the morning and another shot in the evening, 70/30 insulin works all day and all night to keep your blood sugar under control.
- You should **always give yourself shots within 15 minutes before or after eating.**



In the United States, nearly half of adults with diabetes use insulin every day.



What are the side effects of insulin?

The most common side effect of insulin is low blood sugar, also known as **hypoglycemia**. Hypoglycemia can come on suddenly and can make you feel **shaky, sweaty, weak, cranky, hungry, or dizzy**. Be sure that you and your family know these symptoms. They're your signal to take in some quick-acting sugar. Good sources are a half a cup of fruit juice or regular soda (not diet soda), or a heaping tablespoon of sugar.

To help avoid this side effect, monitor your blood glucose regularly. This will tell you if your blood sugar begins to fall too low.

General guidelines for taking insulin

Here are some other general rules to keep in mind:

- **Try to eat your meals and snacks at the same time every day.** Sticking to a regular schedule for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and your bedtime snack will help your insulin work better and keep your blood sugar at the right level.
- **Don't stop taking your insulin,** even if you feel good or your symptoms go away. You need insulin to stay well.
- **Don't adjust your insulin dose** unless your doctor tells you to, even if you eat too much or skip a meal.
- **If you're sick,** most of the time you should keep taking your insulin as usual. But check your blood glucose more often. Sometimes illness increases your need for insulin, and sometimes it decreases your need. Only monitoring will tell you whether you should adjust your dose.
- **If you throw up more than once or have a 101°F fever for more than 8 hours,** call your doctor for advice.

My insulin regimen

Insulin name _____ when to take _____ dose _____

Insulin name _____ when to take _____ dose _____

If I accidentally miss a dose I should: _____

Correction dose, other instructions: _____