



Insulin: The Basics

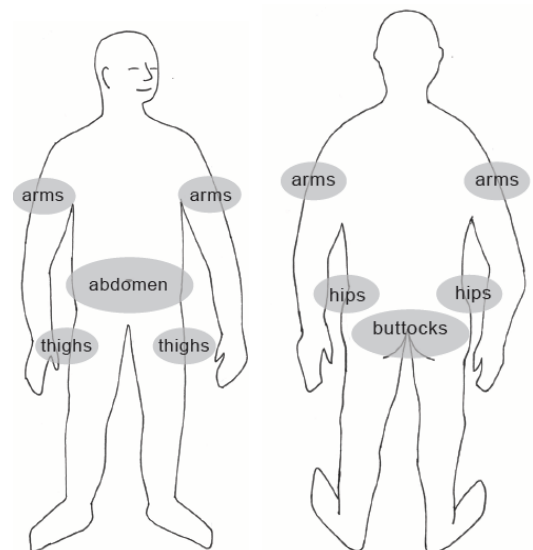
Insulin is a hormone that your body naturally produces. Starting insulin does not mean you are a failure—it may be the best way to keep your blood sugar in the target range. How do you feel about taking insulin?

How to care for insulin:

- Unopened bottles and pens should be stored in the door of the refrigerator and are good until the expiration date.
- Read package insert to check how long your insulin is stable at room temperature.
- In general insulin pens that you are using can be kept at room temperature 7-42 days depending on the type of insulin—discuss with your pharmacist.
- Store the insulin you are using at room temperature (less than 86 degrees) and out of direct sunlight. If insulin becomes frozen, throw it away as it will not work.
- Remove the needle from the pen right after you give your shot.

Site Rotation:

- Absorption is affected by body part, scar tissue, temperature, length of needle and physical activity.
- Sites: abdomen, buttocks, arms, legs (outside hip area), even those love handles!
- Always inject into fat tissue, not muscle—can you pinch an inch?
- Be sure to use different sites for each shot.
- Stay two finger widths away from belly button.



- Using the same site too often can cause scar tissue and then the insulin can't absorb into the body, making blood sugars high and causing you to need more insulin.
- Check sites for scar tissue by feeling for lumpy, hard spots under skin.

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