



A pictorial guide to diabetes care, supplies, and devices

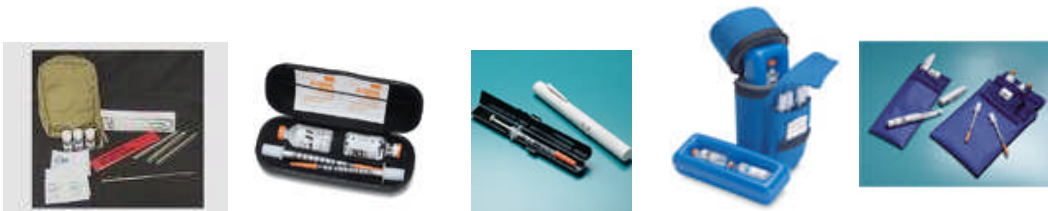
Caution: This publication contains depictions of blood, needles and medical procedures related to diabetes care.



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Basic diabetes supplies

Persons with diabetes carry a lot of supplies. How they administer insulin varies and so the supplies each person will need also varies. However, most people with diabetes carry a basic diabetes kit, fast sugars, medical alert information and identification, and a glucagon kit.



Insulin and syringes are usually transported in some sort of kit.



Fast sugars may include glucose gel, glucose tablets, cake mate gel, candy, or juice boxes.



I HAVE DIABETES
I am not intoxicated
 If my behavior seems unusual, and if I can swallow, give me sugar in any form - fruit juice, soda, syrup candy, etc.
Call a doctor

Most persons with diabetes will wear some sort of medical alert jewelry.



Everyone who takes insulin should always carry a glucagon kit!

Blood sugar testing

Things you may see when a person with diabetes checks their blood sugar:



Alcohol pads are used to sterilize fingertips and injection sites



Basic testing supplies: lancing device, testing strips, and a glucose meter



Lancing device in use



A small blood droplet is put onto a test strip and inserted into a meter

To check blood sugar levels a person must take a sample of blood. This is most often done with a finger stick using a tiny needle (lancet) housed in a lancing device. The lancet remains in the lancing device until it is manually removed and disposed of. Unless you manually set the lancing device to pierce, place it against your skin, and click it, there is no danger of being pierced by the lancet. The blood droplet is put on a test strip that is inserted into a blood glucose meter and the result is displayed on a screen. There is no danger of being pricked by any part of a blood glucose meter.



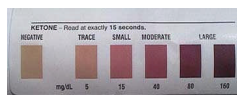
Some people may use one-time use, disposable lancets, like the kind your doctor uses. Since these do not contain a cap or protective cover they should only be handled by the person using them.



Multi-use lancets fit into a lancing device.



Lancing devices must be manually set to pierce the skin.



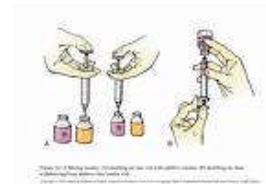
Ketone test strips are used for testing urine for ketones if blood sugars are over 240 mg/dL.

Injecting insulin via syringe or pen

Things you may see when a person injects insulin with a syringe or insulin pen:



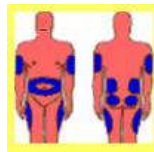
Insulin is fragile and must be stored and handled with care. All insulin comes in a glass vial with the exception of pre-filled insulin cartridges. Insulin is sometimes placed in protective, spongy covers or cooling pouches to help protect against damage and temperature changes when transporting insulin. Some people simply use a portable diabetes care kit.



Some patients combine two types of insulin.



Some patients use 1 type of insulin or a combination of insulin that cannot be mixed together.



Possible injection sites.

To inject insulin, a person first sterilizes the injection site. Insulin may be injected on the abdomen, buttocks, thighs, hips, and flesh part of the upper arms. The patient inserts the needle quickly, and pushes on the syringe, (or pen plunger), waits a few seconds and then withdraws the needle. Sometimes, insulin may leak from the injection site, or a small amount of blood may appear.

Used syringes and other medical waste should be disposed of properly.



Sharps containers should be used for disposal of used syringes and lancets.

Insulin pumps

Things you might see when a person uses an insulin pump:



Insulin pumps are small, portable devices used to deliver insulin under the skin via a canula. Insulin pumps are usually placed in pouches, pockets, belts and their features vary considerably. All contain a disposable cartridge inside the unit and deliver insulin in two ways: “basal” or background insulin that is delivered every few minutes and “bolus” insulin that is delivered when meals are eaten or to correct high blood sugars.



A canula is inserted under the skin and worn at all times when an insulin pump is in use. The canula is changed ever 2-3 days or if the site goes “bad” and no longer properly works for insulin doses. Canulas may be worn anywhere insulin can be injected such as on the stomach, thighs, buttocks, and fleshy areas of the arm.



To prepare the canula sterile solution is used. Betadine, alcohol or prepackaged hospital IV preps are used.



To cover the canula many people use clear, medical “film.”



To remove the canula medical adhesive removers may be used. Though not always recommended some people use baby oil or nail polish remover.



There are many styles and sizes of canulas for use with insulin pumps.

Ways that insulin can be administered

Insulin is delivered under the skin, intravenously (only in the hospital), or, in some cases, may be inhaled.



Syringes are most commonly used to inject insulin. They are the least expensive of all injection options but require the most “work” in preparing injections and transporting insulin.



Insulin pens are becoming more commonly used among those who inject insulin. Insulin pens come in pre-filled cartridges that are thrown away when empty, or with refillable cartridges. Pens are easily transported but are more expensive to use than standard syringes.



There are many kinds of insulin pumps available today. However, all insulin pumps require the patient to wear a needle (metal or “soft” canula of plastic) under the skin. The canula is changed every 2-3 days. Insulin is delivered continually via adjustable “basal” programs, and by pushing buttons to deliver “bolus” insulin at meal times and to correct high blood sugars. Some insulin pumps can now help calculate how much insulin is needed.



Insulin injectors use a powerful force or air to break the skin and inject insulin.



Inhaled insulin is not FDA approved for children or patients with respiratory problems, and is most often prescribed as a supplement to injected insulin, not as a replacement.

Miscellaneous diabetes care supplies

Other things you might see when a person has diabetes:



BYETTA is a prescription drug that is injected under the skin like insulin. It only comes in pre-filled, disposable pens. BYETTA is sometimes prescribed for persons with type 2 diabetes, latent autoimmune diabetes, or pre-diabetes. BYETTA must be kept cool at all times and once opened is only good for thirty days.



Special insulated pouches are sometimes used to transport and keep insulin vials, pens, BYETTA, or syringes filled with insulin cool, at the right temperature.



Adhesive strips are often used to cover injection sites.



A home HbA1c testing kit requires blood sampling just like when a person tests blood sugars. These HbA1c home test kits give an average of blood sugars over the previous (approximate) 3 months. A person's HbA1c test result is just one tool used to determine how well diabetes is being controlled.



Sharps containers should be used for disposal of used syringes, pen needles, and lancing devices. Many communities have drop off points (often fire stations) where filled sharps containers can be exchanged for free for an empty container. Syringes and lancets should never be thrown away in the regular trash.