

# Key things to remember if you use injectable medication to treat your diabetes

- This guide will help you achieve the best technique for injecting insulin and GLP-1 medication using a pen device.
- Take time to also read the instructions supplied by the manufacturer of your medication.
- Speak to your doctor or nurse if you are worried about giving yourself an injection – they can suggest techniques or even devices that may help.

Use the checklist below to help make sure you are getting the best from your injectable medication:

## After collecting your medication:

- Do you always store unopened insulin or GLP-1 medications in a fridge between 2-8 degrees (preferably in the door compartment away from the ice box) and do not allow it to freeze?
- Do you always check the name of your insulin or GLP-1 and pen against your prescription, and for its expiry date before preparing your injection?
- If you use a cloudy insulin do you always correctly mix it so that it has an even milky appearance?
- Have you checked your needle length (4mm pen needles are suitable and are advised for most people)?

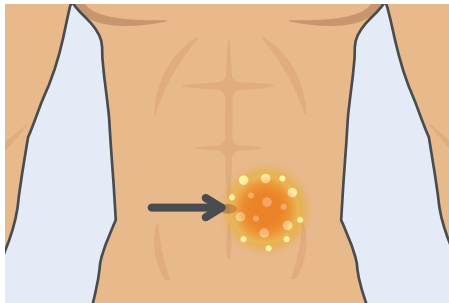
## Before every injection:

- Do you select a new needle every time you inject?
- Do you always ensure the needle and pen are working correctly with a 2 unit "air shot" for insulin or follow manufacturers' instructions for preparing GLP-1 pen devices?
- Do you always check the site you plan to inject into and avoid it if there are signs of lumpiness below the skin?
- Do you follow a rotation process?
- Do you always rotate within the site you have chosen making sure each injection is given 1cm away from the last?
- Having dialled the required dose do you fully insert the needle into the skin at 90 degrees?
- After pressing the dose knob fully do you always count to 10 before removing the needle to ensure the full dose is delivered?
- Do you always safely remove the needle from the pen (unless the needle automatically retracts) and dispose of it into a sharps bin?

**✘ IF YOU HAVE ANSWERED "NO" TO ANY OF THE ITEMS ON THE CHECKLIST YOU MAY WISH TO SPEAK WITH YOUR DOCTOR OR NURSE**

### Every month check for signs of lipohypertrophy:

- Look for changes in the contour of your skin in the areas you inject (it helps to have good light - you may need to use a mirror) – are there bumps or dimpling?
- Use your fingertips to feel the areas where you inject with a light massage-like motion (it may help to use liquid soap or gel in the shower or when lying in the bath).



**⚠ If you identify lumpy areas where you inject speak to your doctor or nurse.**

- i** All this information is within the **Injection Technique Matters – Best Practice in Diabetes Care Toolkit** – ask your doctor or nurse for your copy
- i** If you have been injecting into these lumpy areas then switch to healthy tissue insulin doses may have to be adjusted – seek advice from your doctor or nurse.

### Every time you have a diabetes review with your doctor or nurse:

- Ask them to examine your injection sites for any lumpy areas
- Ask them to note the size and position of the lumpy areas in your notes so you can see if the areas improve over time



[www.trend-uk.org](http://www.trend-uk.org)

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