

8. My doctor mentioned that insulin will help me control my disease. Why do I still need to monitor my home glucose?

- Checking your glucose helps you understand how food, exercise, stress and medications affect your blood glucose levels.
- With more home glucose readings, your doctor can adjust your insulin doses better.

9. When monitoring home glucose, what level of glucose is optimal?

- Before food glucose level 4.0-8.0mmol/L
- 2-hour after food glucose level 5.0-10.0mmol/L

Note: Blood glucose targets may vary for each individual.

10. Do I need to be on insulin forever?

- If you have type 1 diabetes, you CANNOT STOP insulin.
- If you have type 2 diabetes, you may be able to stop insulin if you can achieve significant amount of weight loss and maintain good diet control.

Never stop insulin without consulting your doctor.

Clinic B2B

TTSH Medical Centre, Level B2

Contact:

6357 7000 (Central Hotline)



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Department of
ENDOCRINOLOGY

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on Insulin



1. Why do I need insulin?

- Insulin allows glucose to move into cells to be stored in the body as energy (fuel). Blood glucose levels will build up when there is insufficient insulin produced or when your body is unable to use insulin properly. This will lead to diabetes related complications in the long term.
- Insulin is crucial for patients with type 1 diabetes.
- If you have type 2 diabetes, insulin may be needed if lifestyle and diet measures cannot control your glucose levels, or if you have conditions that make other oral medications unsuitable.
- Insulin is the safest option in controlling blood glucose level during pregnancy.

2. Does being on insulin mean that I am going to die?

This is NOT TRUE.

Many patients have the misconception that their health is deteriorating when they are advised to take insulin.

At certain stages of the disease, insulin becomes necessary to bring glucose levels back to control.

Insulin is there to improve your health, not take it away!

3. Does insulin make me hungry and put on weight?

- It is true that insulin can lead to weight gain. Hence, it is important to control your diet and maintain an active lifestyle.
- Discuss with your doctor if you have concerns with weight gain.

4. How many types of Insulin are available?

- Insulin can be divided into slow-acting or fast-acting.
 - A) Slow-acting (basal insulin):

Acts slowly throughout the day, lasting up to 24 hours.
 - B) Fast-acting (meal-time insulin):

Acts quickly to control the rise in blood glucose after food. This type of insulin must be taken together with food. You should not take it if you are going to skip your meals.
- Some insulin preparations mix both slow and fast acting insulin into the same bottle or pen.

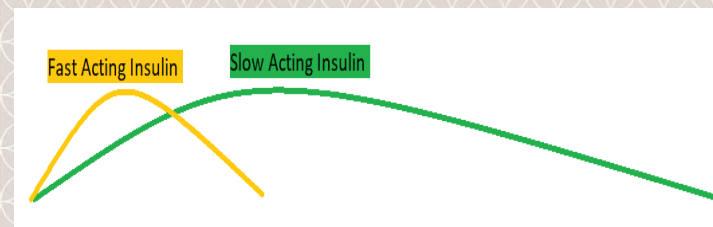


Figure 1. The above diagram shows the different actions of fast and slow acting insulin.

5. Should I choose insulin in a glass bottle or in a pen?

The following may be able to help you make your choice.

If any of the statements below describe you, a pen insulin may be more suitable.

- 1) My daily routine is not regular.
- 2) My meal timings are irregular.
- 3) I often travel overseas.
- 4) I often experience low glucose levels (hypoglycaemia).

6. Can I just Inject insulin once a day?

- Slow-acting (basal insulin) can sometimes be injected once a day.
- Fast-acting (meal-time insulin) is usually injected between one to three times a day.
- Speak to your doctor to discuss which type of insulin suits you.

7. Why are my insulin doses different from other patients?

- The dose of insulin is dependent on each person's body weight, diet, exercise, lifestyle, use of other medications and existing medical conditions.
- Take note and follow your prescribed insulin doses.