

When Your Doctor Says It's Time to Start Insulin

If you have type 2 diabetes and your blood glucose isn't well controlled through diet and oral medicines, your provider may want you to start insulin. You may feel some of the following concerns.

You don't understand what you've done wrong.

Diabetes usually progresses over time. There comes a time when more and stronger treatment is needed. When the pills that have controlled your blood glucose no longer work, insulin is needed. This doesn't mean you have failed. It is expected in the course of the disease.

You feel isolated.

You are not alone! Most healthy patients with diabetes can expect to live long lives after their disease is diagnosed. A large number will require insulin at some point. Many are not happy about taking injections, but most adjust to them well.

You feel like your life is going to change.

In some cases, insulin treat-

ment may be temporary. In others, it is not. Whatever is needed to control your blood glucose should be used. That's what keeps you healthy.

When your blood glucose is well controlled, you may have more energy, sleep better, and enjoy better moods. You can still do all of your usual activities, eat meals out, and live your life. You may need to check your blood glucose more often, but this will keep you safe, healthy, and informed. You may be surprised that this is a much smaller burden than you thought it would be.

You've heard that insulin causes blindness and kidney failure.

Nothing could be further from the truth. High blood glucose cause blindness, kidney failure, and other problems, such as nerve damage that can lead to amputations. But eye, kidney, and nerve damage can be delayed or prevented by good control. Insulin will NOT make your diabetes worse, and

it is one of the most natural diabetes treatments available.

You're afraid to take injections or worried about a complicated insulin routine.

Insulin needles today are so small and thin that patients barely feel them. And most starting insulin routines are fairly simple. Your provider may even be able to prescribe an insulin pen device, which makes injections even easier.

You're afraid injections will hurt or that you'll have low blood glucose reactions (hypoglycemia).

Most patients find that insulin shots don't hurt. Severe hypoglycemia is far more common in people with type 1 diabetes. Mild hypoglycemia may sometimes occur in patients with type 2 diabetes, but your provider will teach you how to detect, prevent, and treat it.

