

How to inject insulin using an insulin pen

Gather your supplies:

- Insulin pen
- New pen needle
- Alcohol swabs
- Sharps container (a plastic bottle with a lid and thick walls will work, for example a laundry detergent or plastic milk container)

Prepare the pen

1. Wash your hands
2. Pull the cover off the pen



3. With an alcohol swab wipe the rubber stopper at the top of the pen
4. Remove the tabbed paper from the pen needle
5. Gently push the end of the needle into the rubber stopper. Screw the needle into place. Then take off both needle caps



Prime the Pen

You need to prime the insulin pen before every injection. This gets rid of any air bubbles and makes sure the pen and needle are working properly.

1. Dial 2 units on the dose selector dial by turning it clockwise or to the right. You will hear and feel a click for each unit as you turn the dial.
2. Point the needle up. Press the plunger button with your thumb and push out the 2 units of insulin. The dose selector dial will return to zero when all insulin has been pushed out.



3. If necessary, repeat steps until a drop or stream of insulin appears at the needle tip. If you are using a new pen, you may need to prime it more than once to get a drop of insulin out of the tip.

Set the dose

1. Turn the dose selector clockwise, or to the right, to set your dose. Set it to the number of units recommended by your child's doctor or diabetes educator. If you dial past the correct number of insulin units, turn the dose selector counterclockwise, or to the left, to correct it.



childrenscolorado.org

Author: Endocrinology | Approved by Patient Education Committee | Valid through 2026

The information presented is intended for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of your personal doctor's advice and is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. The information should not be used in place of a visit, call or consultation or advice of your doctor or other health care provider.

Inject the insulin

You can inject your child's insulin on the back of their arms, abdomen, outer part of their thigh, or hips.

1. Clean the site selected with an alcohol swab.
2. Pinch your child's skin gently.
3. Hold the pen with your thumb on the plunger button and the number dial facing you.
4. Put the needle into your child's skin at a 90 degree angle.
5. Push the plunger button (with your thumb) until dial goes back to zero.
6. Wait at least 10 seconds before pulling the needle from the injection site.



7. Recap the needle with the larger needle cap.
8. Unscrew the needle from the pen and throw it away in the sharps container.
9. Put the pen cover back on and store at room temperature.