

Medication Information

Intermediate Acting Insulin

Names for this kind of insulin are:

Humulin[®]-N

Novolin[®]ge NPH

How fast and long does this insulin work to control blood sugar?

- Starts to work within 1 to 3 hours.
- Maximum effect between 5 to 8 hours.
- Lasts up to 18 hours.

How to take this insulin

Follow your doctor's or diabetes care provider's advice on when to take this insulin. It is usually taken once a day at bedtime. If you use this insulin 2 times a day, it is usually taken with breakfast and before bedtime. Give at the same time each day.

If you forget to take this insulin, you can still take it up to 1 hour after the scheduled time.

Your diabetes care provider or pharmacist will show you how and where to inject this insulin.

How long is insulin safe to use?

- Always check the expiry date on the package before using. Never use expired insulin.
- After opening you must use it in 28 days or throw it out.
- You can store opened insulin at room temperature or in the fridge.
- **Store unopened insulin in the fridge.**
- Opened insulin does not have to be kept in the fridge.
- Never keep insulin close to a stove, microwave or in a vehicle where it may be too hot or too cold. This destroys insulin.

While you are taking this medication you may notice:

- low blood sugar

Some signs of low blood sugar are:

- dizziness
- clammy skin
- cold sweat
- tiredness
- slurred speech
- shakiness
- headache
- mood change

Check your blood sugar if you feel any of these symptoms.

If your blood sugar is below 4.0 mmol/L:

1. Take 15 grams of a fast acting carbohydrate right away.
Taking 15 grams of a fast acting carbohydrate will raise your blood sugar quickly. Examples of 15 grams of fast acting carbohydrates are:
 - Chew glucose or dextrose tablets. Read the package to know how many you need to chew to make 15 grams **or**
 - Drink 175 ml or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup orange juice **or**
 - Drink 175 ml or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup regular pop
2. Wait 15 minutes and check your blood sugar again.
3. If your blood sugar is still below 4.0 mmol/L, treat again with 15 grams of a fast acting carbohydrate listed above.
4. Repeat these steps until your blood sugar is in your target level.
5. If your next meal or snack is more than 1 hour away, you need to eat $\frac{1}{2}$ sandwich or 6 crackers with cheese to keep your blood sugar greater than 4.0 mmol/L.

You can talk to your diabetes care provider or pharmacist about other fast acting carbohydrates to carry with you to prevent or treat low blood sugar.

What do I do when I am sick?

- Take your diabetes medication.
- Eat your usual meals and snacks (if you have snacks), at your usual time if you can.
- Test your blood sugar level at least every 4 hours.
- Talk to your health care provider about how to deal with sick days.



What if I am too sick to eat?

If you are unable to eat your usual meals and snack(s), have one of these every hour:

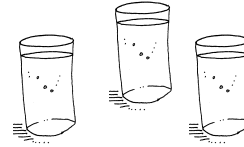
- ½ cup (125 ml) juice **or**
- ½ cup (125 ml) regular pop **or**
- ½ cup (125 ml) regular Jell-O **or**
- 1 whole popsicle



You may need to test your blood sugar more often.

Drink lots of sugar free fluids such as:

- water
- clear broth
- tea
- diet pop



Contact your doctor or diabetes care provider right away if you:

- have continued low blood sugars
- vomit more than 2 times in 12 hours

Drive safe

When you take insulin you are at risk of having a low blood sugar while driving. If you have a low blood sugar while driving, you are a danger to yourself and others.

Your blood sugar should be over 5.0 mmol/L to drive.

Talk to your diabetes care provider or pharmacist for more information on how to be prepared and stay safe.