

Instructions for Patients with Type 2 Diabetes Who are Starting and Adjusting Basal Insulin

You will be taking _____ insulin. This is a long-acting insulin injected once or twice daily. It does not need to be administered with food.

How to adjust your insulin dose

- Your target fasting blood glucose/sugar level is _____ mmol/L. (For most people using insulin it is 5-7 mmol/L)
- Start injecting _____ units of _____ insulin at bedtime, or _____ units in the mornings.
- Increase your insulin dose by 1 unit every day until your fasting blood glucose level is between 6 and 7 mmol/L.
- Once you have achieved this fasting glucose level remain on the same dose of insulin. Do not adjust the dose of your insulin based on your blood sugar reading at bedtime.
- Most people require between 15 and 40 units of long-acting insulin daily.
- If your fasting glucose level starts rising above 7 mmol/L continue to increase the dose of your long-acting insulin by 1-unit increments (exactly like when you first started the insulin).
- If your fasting blood glucose is less than 6 mmol/L, do not increase your insulin dose.
- Contact your physician, nurse practitioner or diabetes educator if your fasting glucose decreases below 5 mmol/L.

A side effect of insulin is low blood glucose (hypoglycemia).

Low blood glucose can occur when there is too much insulin for what your body needs; for example, when you are more physically active or eating less than usual. Hypoglycemia less likely to occur if the new insulin is increased slowly, and you continue to monitor your fasting glucose levels every day.

Low blood glucose levels during the night may cause unusual dreams or nightmares, night sweats, or waking for no obvious reason. If this occurs, check your blood sugar. If this is less than 5.0 mmol/L reduce your dose of insulin by 2 units and contact your healthcare provider so that they can guide insulin adjustment.

Also contact you physician, nurse practitioner or diabetes educator if you experience any low glucose (hypoglycemia) symptoms during the day, or if you need to eat snacks in between meals or before bed to prevent a low blood sugar.