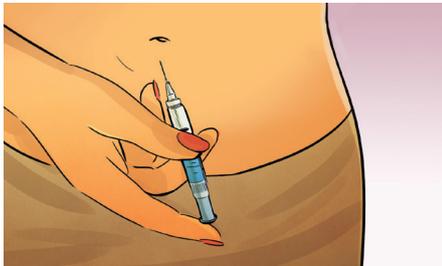


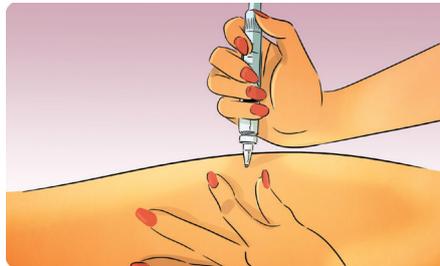
## 7 - Insulin (part 1)

Insulin is a hormone which is secreted by the beta cells in the pancreas, and it regulates the metabolism of glucose in the blood so it can be used for energy by the body. Insulin is the “key” which allows sugar into the cells, and thus reduces the level of sugar in the blood.

### How is it administered?



When the pancreas stops secreting insulin or does not secrete enough, it has to be administered from outside via a subcutaneous injection.



Insulin cannot be taken by mouth, but it can be injected under the skin using a special syringe or a “pen” with a special needle.



Your doctor will prescribe the type of insulin you need, and will tell you how much to take and how to take it, i.e. how many units to inject and when (at mealtimes or before you go to bed).

### How do I use an insulin pen?



It looks very like a fountain pen, and has a throwaway needle, a pre-filled cartridge of insulin, and a dial which you turn to set the amount you have to inject.



Pre-mixed insulin cartridges (30/70, 50/50, 70/30) must be turned over a few times to mix them gently before you administer them.

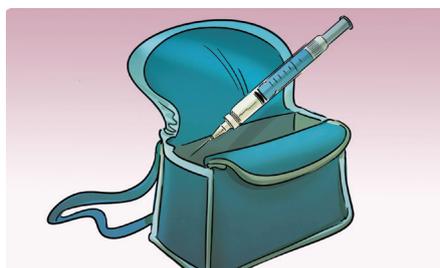


Before you inject, always make sure the pen and the needle are working properly by squirting a couple of units of insulin into the air. When you have injected your insulin, count to 10 before pulling the needle out.

### Always make sure...



The “pen” you are using is kept at room temperature. Other pens should be kept on the lowest shelf of the refrigerator, but not in the freezer.



Insulin becomes less efficient when exposed to extremes of temperature. An insulated pouch is ideal when you are travelling or going to work.



Once you have taken your insulin, do not skip or delay your meal. In this way, you risk hypoglycaemia. (See sheet. 14 “Hypoglycaemia”).