

# Insulin NPH

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*Brand names: Novolin N, Humulin N*

## What does it do?

Provides the insulin the body needs to maintain normal levels of blood glucose (sugar).

This insulin is an intermediate-acting (medium-acting) insulin. It starts working in about 1 to 2 hours. It lasts 12 to 18 hours.

## How do I take it?

- This insulin is given as a shot under the skin of your upper arms, upper legs or abdomen (belly).
- Before use, the insulin must be mixed. Roll the vial or pen in between your hands 10 times. Then invert the pen 10 times. The insulin should appear white and cloudy. Do not use if the insulin appears clear or has lumps in it.
- Rotate the injection site within your chosen area. For example, if you always inject in your abdomen, use a different spot on your abdomen each time.
- Your doctor will tell you the dose and how often to inject it.
- It comes in vials, pens or cartridges. Do not shake them.
- **If you miss a dose:** Call your diabetes care team.

## What are the possible side effects?

- Redness, swelling, pain, itching, burning or a lump at the injection site (where the shot was given).
- Changes at the injection site. The fatty tissue under the skin may change (shrink or thicken). Rotating the injection site can prevent this. Do not inject into skin that is like this.
- Low blood glucose (less than 70). Signs of low blood glucose include:
  - Sweating
  - Sudden hunger
  - Feeling shaky
  - Fast heartbeat
  - Feeling dizzy, confused or weak
  - Headache or problems seeing
  - Feeling irritable.

## How should I store my insulin?

Store **opened** insulin at room temperature. Keep it away from sunlight and heat.

Store **unopened** insulin in the refrigerator. Do not freeze it.

Keep all medicine out of the reach of children and pets.

Type of insulin	How long it can be stored at room temperature
Humulin N U-100 vials	31 days
Humulin N U-100 Kwikpen	14 days
Novolin N U-100 vials	42 days

## When should I call my diabetes care team?

You should call the doctor right away if you notice any of the following:

- Frequent high or low blood glucose.
- Nausea (feeling sick to your stomach) or vomiting (throwing up).
- Flu-like symptoms (fever, chills).
- Any sign of an allergic reaction, such as:
  - Hives or itchy skin
  - Swelling in the face, hands, mouth or throat
  - Tingling in the mouth or throat
  - A tight feeling in the chest
  - Trouble breathing, wheezing.

## What else should I know before taking this medicine?

- Before taking this medicine, tell your doctor:
  - About all medicines you are taking, including over-the-counter drugs and herbal products.
  - If you have kidney or liver disease.
  - If you are pregnant or planning on becoming pregnant.
  - If you are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed.
- Always carry some form of carbohydrate with you.
- Your dose may need to change when you are ill or when you change your diet or activity.
- Alcohol may cause symptoms that feel like low blood glucose. Check your blood glucose often when drinking alcohol.
- Do not change brands of insulin without talking to your doctor.