

Types of Insulin

There are many types of insulin available today. They fall into three main categories: rapid -acting insulin, intermediate- acting insulin and long-acting insulin. We will now go into detail about the most common insulin we use.

Rapid-Acting Insulin – works very rapidly to lower the blood sugar

Names: Insulin lispro (Humalog®)
 Insulin aspart (Novolog®)
 Insulin glulisine (Apidra®)

Begins Working: 10-15 minutes
Strongest Effect (peak): 1-2 hours
All Gone 3-4 hours

This insulin works very fast and should be given no earlier than 20 minutes before a meal. It may be given in a syringe or by pen, and may be given by itself or in combination with an intermediate or long acting insulin

Intermediate – Acting Insulin - works more slowly and last longer

Name: Novolin NPH
 Humulin NPH

Begins Working: 1- 1 ½ hours
Strongest Effect (peak) 6-8 hours
All Gone 8-16 hours

May be given by pen or syringe, and may be combined with a rapid-acting insulin
This insulin is cloudy and must be rolled several times before using it

Long-Acting Insulin – works up to 24hours as a background or “basal” insulin

Name: Insulin Glargine (Lantus®)
 Insulin Detemir (Levemir®)

Begins Working: 2-4 hours
Strongest Effect (peak): No peak
All Gone 14-24 hours

Must be given by itself by pen or in a syringe, not mixed with any other insulins
Some people need only one dose per day, others need to have two injections per day