

# Giving an INSULIN INJECTION

## Using a Vial and Syringe

### Drawing up insulin:

1. Pull the cap off of the vial. Discard cap.
2. Wipe the vial's rubber top with alcohol.
3. Remove the plastic needle cap from the needle-and-syringe by pulling it straight off. Do not let anything touch or contaminate the needle.
4. Pull back the plunger of the syringe to the number of insulin units you will be taking.
5. Place the insulin vial on a flat surface and push the needle through the rubber top. Push down on the plunger to push the air into the vial.
6. Turn the vial upside down and hold the needle-and-syringe in place.
7. Make sure the tip of the needle is in the insulin solution, then pull the plunger back by pulling on the flat knob of the plunger. Pull back until you have drawn up the prescribed number of units.
8. Remove any air bubbles from the syringe. To do so, hold the needle-and-syringe with needle pointing up, still in the vial, and tap the syringe, so air bubbles float to the top.
9. Still holding the syringe upright, slowly push the plunger, until you push all the air out of the syringe and back into the vial.
10. Remove needle-syringe from the vial. Cap needle.
11. Check the number of insulin units in the syringe. If you have too little or too much, adjust the plunger until you have the right amount.

### Injecting insulin:

1. Rotation of sites, inject into fatty tissue, stay 2" away from the navel; do not inject insulin into scar tissue.
2. Refrigerate unopened INSULIN VIALS.
3. Keep the insulin VIAL you are using at room temperature; it should be good for about 40 days.
4. Dispose of needle and syringe in a hard plastic or metal container, such as a laundry detergent bottle or coffee can.
5. **Common symptoms of hypoglycemia** or low blood sugar, which is a blood sugar less than 70mg/dL, include feeling shaky, sweaty, confused, fast heartbeat, weak and headache.
6. Treatment for hypoglycemia: 4 glucose tabs, or 4 oz. of juice, or ½ **cup of regular** soda, which equals 15 grams of carbohydrate.

### Insulin Basics:

- a. Nutritional insulin is rapid-acting or short-acting insulin, taken 15-30 minutes before meals, to utilize glucose from digested carbohydrates.
- b. Basal insulin is taken at the same time each day, to utilize our body's constant supply of glucose produced by the liver. Some basal insulins last 24 hours, so they are injected once per day, and some last 12 hours, so they are taken before breakfast and before bedtime.
- c. Correction insulin is the same rapid-acting or short-acting insulin given with meals, but in this case, it is injected to promptly fix or "correct" an abnormal blood glucose, much like re-setting your watch..

**\*Patients that practice administering insulin while in the hospital will be more confident with this skill once discharged.**

### Insulin Injection Areas

