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2. Insulin detemir

Insulin Detemir

Generic name: insulin detemir [*IN-su-lin-DE-te-mir*]**Brand names:** [Levemir](#), Levemir FlexTouch, Levemir PenFill, Levemir FlexPen, Levemir InnoLet**Dosage form:** subcutaneous solution (100 units/mL)**Drug class:** [Insulin](#)Medically reviewed by [Philip Thornton, DipPharm](#). Last updated on Mar 17, 2025.[Uses](#) [Warnings](#) [Before taking](#) [Dosage](#) [Side effects](#) [Interactions](#) [FAQ](#)

What is insulin detemir?

Insulin is a hormone that works by lowering levels of glucose (sugar) in the blood. Insulin detemir is a man-made long-acting insulin that starts to work several hours after injection and keeps working evenly for 24 hours.

Insulin detemir is used to improve blood sugar control in people with [diabetes mellitus](#).

Insulin detemir is for use in adults and children at least 2 years old.

Insulin detemir is not to be used to treat diabetic ketoacidosis.

Warnings

Never share an injection pen or syringe with another person, even if the needle has been changed.

Before taking this medicine

You should not use insulin detemir if you are allergic to it. Do not use during an episode of [hypoglycemia](#) (low blood sugar) or [diabetic ketoacidosis](#) (call your doctor for treatment).

To make sure insulin detemir is safe for you, tell your doctor if you have ever had:

- low levels of potassium in your blood ([hypokalemia](#)); or
- liver or kidney disease.

Tell your doctor if you also take [pioglitazone](#) or [rosiglitazone](#) (sometimes contained in combinations with [glimepiride](#) or [metformin](#)). Taking certain oral diabetes medicines while you are using insulin detemir may increase your risk of serious heart problems.

Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Follow your doctor's instructions about using insulin detemir **if you are pregnant or you become pregnant**. Controlling diabetes is very important during pregnancy, and having high blood sugar may cause complications in both the mother and the baby.

 [Insulin detemir pregnancy and breastfeeding warnings](#) (more detail)

How should I use insulin detemir?

Use insulin detemir exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Follow all directions on your prescription label and read all medication guides or instruction sheets.

Insulin detemir is injected under the skin. A healthcare provider may teach you how to properly use the medication by yourself.

Read and carefully follow any Instructions for Use provided with your medicine. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you don't understand all instructions.

Prepare an insulin detemir injection only when you are ready to give it. Do not use if the medicine looks cloudy, has changed colors, or has particles in it. Call your pharmacist for new medicine.

Your healthcare provider will show you where on your body to inject insulin detemir. Use a different place each time you give an injection. Do not inject into the same place two times in a row.

Do not inject insulin detemir into skin that is damaged, tender, bruised, pitted, thickened, scaly, or has a scar or hard lump.

If you use insulin detemir once daily, use the injection at your evening meal or at bedtime. If you use the medicine twice daily, use your evening dose at least 12 hours after your morning dose.

Your doctor may want you to also use a short-acting insulin. Always inject your insulins separately. Insulin detemir must not be given with an insulin pump, or mixed with other insulins. Do not inject into a vein or a muscle.

If you use an injection pen, use only the injection pen that comes with insulin detemir. Attach a new needle before each use. Do not transfer the insulin from the pen into a syringe.

Never share an injection pen or syringe with another person, even if the needle has been changed. Sharing these devices can allow infections or disease to pass from one person to another.

Use a needle and syringe only once and then place them in a puncture-proof "sharps" container. Follow state or local laws about how to dispose of this container. Keep it out of the reach of children and pets.

You may have low blood sugar (**hypoglycemia**) and feel very hungry, dizzy, irritable, confused, anxious, or shaky. To quickly treat hypoglycemia, eat or drink a fast-acting source of sugar (fruit juice, hard candy, crackers, raisins, or non-diet soda).

Your doctor may prescribe a [glucagon](#) injection kit in case you have severe hypoglycemia. Be sure your family or close friends know how to give you this injection in an emergency.

Also watch for signs of high blood sugar (hyperglycemia) such as increased thirst or urination.

Blood sugar levels can be affected by [stress](#), illness, surgery, exercise, alcohol use, or skipping meals. **Ask your doctor before changing your dose or medication schedule.**

Insulin detemir is only part of a complete treatment program that may also include diet, exercise, weight control, regular blood sugar testing, and special medical care. Follow your doctor's instructions very closely.

Keep insulin detemir in its original container protected from heat and light. Do not draw insulin from a vial into a syringe until you are ready to give an injection. Do not freeze insulin or store it near the cooling element in a refrigerator. **Throw away any insulin that has been frozen.**

Storing unopened (not in use) insulin detemir:

- Refrigerate and use until [expiration date](#); or
- Store at room temperature and use within 42 days.

Storing opened (in use) insulin detemir:

- Store the vial in a refrigerator or at room temperature and use within 42 days.
- Store the injection pen at room temperature (do not refrigerate) and use within 42 days. Do not store the injection pen with a needle attached.

In case of emergency, wear or carry medical identification to let others know you have diabetes.

 [Detailed Insulin detemir dosage information](#)

What happens if I miss a dose?

Call your doctor for instructions if you miss a dose. Keep insulin on hand at all times. Get your prescription refilled before you run out of medicine completely.

What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222. **Insulin overdose can cause life-threatening hypoglycemia.** Symptoms include drowsiness, confusion, blurred vision, numbness or tingling in your mouth, trouble speaking, muscle weakness, clumsy or jerky movements, seizure (convulsions), or loss of consciousness.

What should I avoid while using insulin detemir?

Insulin can cause low blood sugar. Avoid driving or operating machinery until you know how insulin detemir will affect you.

Avoid medication errors by always checking the medicine label before injecting your insulin.

Avoid drinking alcohol.

Insulin detemir side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have **signs of an allergy to insulin detemir**: redness or swelling where an injection was given, [itchy skin](#) rash over the entire body, trouble breathing, fast heartbeats, feeling like you might pass out, or swelling in your tongue or throat.

Call your doctor at once if you have:

- **fluid retention** - weight gain, swelling in your hands or feet, feeling short of breath; or
- **low potassium** - leg cramps, [constipation](#), irregular heartbeats, fluttering in your chest, increased thirst or urination, numbness or tingling, muscle weakness or limp feeling.

Common insulin detemir side effects may include:

- low blood sugar;
- weight gain;
- swelling in your hands and feet;
- rash, itching; or
- thickening or hollowing of the skin where you injected the medicine.

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

 [Insulin detemir side effects](#) (more detail)

Related/similar drugs

Ozempic

Learn about Ozempic (semaglutide) for type 2 diabetes treatment, weight management, cardiovascular ...

Reviews & ratings

6.6 / 10

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Rybelsus

Rybelsus tablets are used to improve blood sugar control in adults with type 2 diabetes, and may ...

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Lantus

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Tresiba (insulin degludec) is used to treat diabetes mellitus. Includes Tresiba side effects ...

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Victoza

Victoza helps control blood sugar levels and reduce the risk of serious heart problems in people ...

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Humalog

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Metformin

Metformin is an oral diabetes medicine used together with diet and exercise to improve blood sugar ...

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6.8 / 10

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Basaglar

Basaglar (insulin glargine) is a long-acting insulin that is used to improve blood sugar control in ...

Reviews & ratings

2.7 / 10

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What other drugs will affect insulin detemir?

Many other medicines can affect your blood sugar, and some medicines can increase or decrease the effects of insulin. Some drugs can also cause you to have fewer symptoms of hypoglycemia, making it harder to tell when your blood sugar is low. Tell each of your health care providers about all medicines you use now and any medicine you start or stop using. This includes prescription and over-the-counter medicines, [vitamins](#), and [herbal products](#).

 [Insulin detemir drug interactions](#) (more detail)

Does insulin detemir interact with my other drugs?

Enter medications to view a detailed interaction report using our [Drug Interaction Checker](#).

insulin detemir

+

Enter a drug name

Add

Insulin detemir Biosimilars

Biosimilar and interchangeable products are biological products that are highly similar to and have no clinically meaningful differences from the reference product.

Reference products

These are biological products that have already been approved by the FDA, against which biosimilar products are compared. There is 1 for insulin detemir.

Levemir (insulin detemir) - Novo Nordisk Inc.

▼

Formulation type	Strength
Autoinjector	300 units/3 mL (100 units/mL) Discontinued
Autoinjector	300 units/3 mL (100 units/mL) Discontinued
Autoinjector	300 units/3 mL (100 units/mL) Discontinued
Multi-Dose Cartridge	300 units/3 mL (100 units/mL) Discontinued
Multi-Dose Vial	1,000 units/10 mL (100 units/mL) Discontinued

View [Levemir](#) information in detail.

Popular FAQ

How and where should I inject insulin?

▼

References

1. [Insulin Detemir Product Label](#)

More about insulin detemir

- [Check interactions](#)
- [Compare alternatives](#)

- [Reviews \(74\)](#)
- [Side effects](#)
- [Dosage information](#)
- [During pregnancy](#)
- [Drug class: insulin](#)

Patient resources

- [Insulin Detemir \(Cartridges and Pens\) patient information](#)
- [Insulin Detemir \(Vials\)](#)

Other brands

[Levemir](#)

Professional resources

Other brands

[Levemir](#)

Related treatment guides

- [Diabetes Mellitus](#)
- [Diabetes, Type 1](#)
- [Type 2 Diabetes](#)

Further information

Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use insulin detemir only for the indication prescribed.

Always consult your healthcare provider to ensure the information displayed on this page applies to your personal circumstances.

[Medical Disclaimer](#)

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DRUG STATUS

Availability

Rx Prescription only

Pregnancy & Lactation


 Risk data available

CSA Schedule*



N/A Not a controlled drug

Approval History

 Drug history at FDA



User Reviews & Ratings

4.7 / 10

[74 Reviews](#)

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