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2. Insulin glulisine

Insulin glulisine

Generic name: insulin glulisine [*IN-su-lin-GLOO-lis-een*]

Brand names: [Apidra](#), Apidra OptiClik Cartridge, Apidra SoloStar Pen

Dosage form: injectable solution (100 units/mL)

Drug class: [Insulin](#)



[Medically reviewed](#) by Drugs.com on Mar 27, 2025. Written by [Cerner Multum](#).

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What is insulin glulisine?

Insulin is a hormone that works by lowering levels of glucose (sugar) in the blood. Insulin glulisine is a **fast-acting** insulin that starts to work about 15 minutes after injection, peaks in about 1 hour, and keeps working for 2 to 4 hours.

Insulin glulisine is used to improve blood sugar control in adults and children with [diabetes mellitus](#). Insulin glulisine is used to treat type 1 or [type 2 diabetes](#) in adults, and [type 1 diabetes](#) children who are at least 4 years old.

Insulin glulisine may also be used for purposes not listed in this medication guide.

Insulin glulisine side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have **signs of insulin allergy**: 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.

Insulin glulisine may cause serious side effects. 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 side effects of insulin glulisine may include:

- [low blood sugar](#);
- itching, mild skin rash; 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.

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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 glulisine if you are allergic to it, or if you are having an episode of [hypoglycemia](#) (low blood sugar).

Insulin glulisine is not approved for use by anyone younger than 4 years old, and **should not be used to treat type 2 diabetes in a child of any age.**

Tell your doctor if you have ever had:

- liver or kidney disease;
- low levels of potassium in your blood ([hypokalemia](#)); or
- [diabetic ketoacidosis](#) (call your doctor for treatment).

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 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 **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.

How should I use insulin glulisine?

Follow all directions on your prescription label and read all medication guides or instruction sheets. Use the medicine exactly as directed.

Insulin glulisine is injected under the skin, or given as an infusion into a vein. A healthcare provider will give your first dose and may teach you how to properly use the medication by yourself.

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

Prepare an 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 glulisine. Use a different place each time you give an injection. Do not inject into the same place two times in a row.

After using insulin glulisine, eat a meal within 15 minutes. If you did not use an injection before the meal, use the medicine within 20 minutes after you start eating.

If you use insulin glulisine with an IV or insulin pump, do not mix or dilute insulin glulisine with any other insulin.

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

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

Keep this medicine 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 glulisine:

- Refrigerate and use until [expiration date](#); or
- Store at **cool** room temperature (below 77 degrees F) and use within 28 days.

Storing opened (in use) insulin glulisine:

- Store the **vial** in a refrigerator or at cool room temperature and use within 28 days.
- Store the **injection pen** at cool room temperature (**do not refrigerate**) and use within 28 days. Do not store the injection pen with a needle attached.
- Store a prepared **infusion bag** at cool room temperature and use within 48 hours.

Do not use the medicine if it looks cloudy, has changed colors, or has any particles in it. Call your pharmacist for new medicine.

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

 [Detailed Insulin glulisine dosage information](#)

What happens if I miss a dose?

Since insulin glulisine is used before meals, you may not be on a timed dosing schedule. Whenever you use insulin glulisine, be sure to eat a meal within 15 minutes. **Do not** use two doses at the same time.

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 glulisine?

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

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

Avoid drinking alcohol. It can cause low blood sugar and may interfere with your diabetes treatment.

What other drugs will affect insulin glulisine?

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 glulisine drug interactions](#) (more detail)

Does insulin glulisine interact with my other drugs?

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

+

Add

Insulin glulisine 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 glulisine.

Apidra (insulin glulisine) - Sanofi-Aventis U.S. LLC



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

View [Apidra](#) information in detail.

Popular FAQ

What are the different types of insulin?



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Related treatment guides

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Further information

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

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

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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

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