

## Instructions for Insulin Pen Setup and Use

To use an insulin pen, begin by ensuring you have everything you need, including the insulin pen, a new needle, alcohol swabs, and a sharps container for disposal. Start by washing your hands thoroughly with warm water and soap, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds to ensure cleanliness. Dry your hands with a clean towel or air dry them to avoid contamination. Next, examine the insulin pen carefully. Verify that you have the correct type of insulin as prescribed by your healthcare provider, and check the expiration date on the pen. Hold the pen up to the light and inspect the insulin solution inside. It should appear clear and free of particles if it is short-acting insulin; for cloudy insulin, gently roll the pen between your palms to mix it until the solution looks uniformly cloudy.

Now, attach a new needle to the insulin pen. Start by removing the pen cap and setting it aside. Take a fresh needle and peel off its protective paper. Screw or push the needle firmly onto the pen in a straight motion to secure it, but do not overtighten. Once attached, remove the outer cap of the needle and keep it for later disposal. Then, remove the inner needle cap and discard it. Before setting your dose, prime the pen to eliminate air bubbles and ensure the needle is working properly. Dial the pen to 2 units by turning the dose selector and hold the pen upright with the needle pointing towards the ceiling. Gently tap the insulin cartridge with your finger to bring any air bubbles to the top. Press the injection button firmly until a drop of insulin appears at the tip of the needle. If no drop appears, repeat the priming process until one does.

After priming, set the prescribed dose of insulin by turning the dose selector. Carefully check the dose window to confirm the correct number of units is displayed. Be sure to only dial the amount your healthcare provider has instructed, as exceeding the dose can lead to dangerous blood sugar drops. Once the dose is set, prepare the injection site. Choose a suitable area on your body, such as the abdomen (staying at least two inches away from your navel), the outer thighs, or the back of your upper arms. Rotate your injection sites to prevent skin irritation or lumps from forming under the skin. Use an alcohol swab to clean the area and allow it to dry completely to avoid stinging during the injection.

When you are ready to inject, pinch the skin around the chosen site gently to create a fold. Hold the insulin pen like a dart and insert the needle quickly at a 90-degree angle to your skin. For thinner individuals or children, a 45-degree angle may be more appropriate. Once the needle is inserted, press the injection button down completely and hold it in place for a count of 10 seconds to ensure the full dose is delivered. After 10 seconds, carefully withdraw the needle straight out from your skin. Use a cotton ball or gauze to apply gentle pressure to the injection site if necessary, but do not rub the area as it may cause irritation.

Finally, take proper care of the pen and needle after use. Remove the needle from the pen and place it in a sharps container to prevent accidental needle sticks and to comply with safe disposal practices. Never reuse a needle, as this can lead to infections or dull the needle, making future injections more painful. Replace the pen cap and store the pen in an appropriate location. If you are actively using the pen, keep it at room temperature, but if it is a spare or

unopened pen, store it in the refrigerator between 36°F and 46°F (2°C and 8°C). Avoid exposing insulin to direct sunlight, excessive heat, or freezing temperatures, as these conditions can degrade its effectiveness.

Remember to always use a new needle for every injection and follow the instructions provided by your healthcare provider. If you experience any unusual symptoms, such as swelling, redness, or severe pain at the injection site, or if the pen malfunctions in any way, contact your healthcare provider immediately. By adhering to these steps and maintaining proper storage and disposal habits, you can safely and effectively manage your insulin therapy.