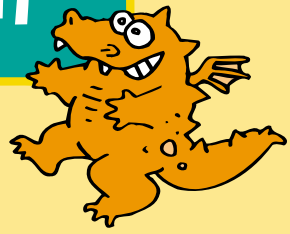


Amazing Audrey's Guide to Awesome Insulin Administration

Most kids get help in giving shots from their parents. As you get older, you'll need less and less help. You and your parents can both use this guide to make giving shots easier.



1. Wash and dry your hands!
Yeah, it's an easy step to forget. But you need clean hands to keep germs from entering your body along with the insulin.

4. Roll it.
If you're injecting intermediate- or long-acting insulin (cloudy), roll the insulin bottle between your hands to mix the insulin evenly. Don't shake the bottle! Shaking can make the insulin clump together. Clear insulin doesn't need to be mixed.

3. Check it out.
Get out your insulin and look at it carefully. Rapid- and short-acting insulins should be clear and colorless. Intermediate- and long-acting insulins should look cloudy, with no clumps or crystals. Insulin that looks weird could be too old or spoiled for some reason. Show it to your parents. If they agree, throw that bottle away and start a new one.

5. Draw air into the syringe.
If you're injecting both clear and cloudy insulin, be certain to draw air for the cloudy insulin first (this is important!). Check how many units you need to inject. Then pull back the plunger to that number of units. Now you have a syringe of air.

9. Draw up your clear insulin.
While holding the needle in the bottle, turn the bottle upside-down. Then pull out the plunger to measure out a bit more rapid- or short-acting insulin than you actually need.

8. Push air into the clear insulin bottle.
Hold the rapid- or short-acting (clear) insulin bottle upright. Push the needle into the top of the bottle. Push the plunger to put the air into the bottle. Keep the needle in the bottle!

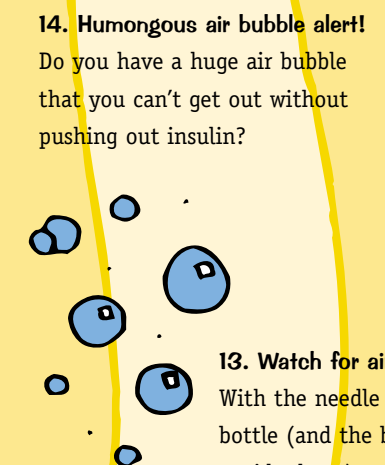
7. Draw air into the syringe.
Otherwise, check how many units of rapid- or short-acting insulin (clear) insulin you need to inject. Then pull back the plunger to that number of units. Now your syringe has air in it again.

6. Push air into the cloudy insulin bottle.
Remember, if you're injecting both clear and cloudy, do cloudy first (otherwise, just skip ahead to clear, below). Hold the intermediate- or long-acting (cloudy) insulin bottle upright. Push the needle into the top of the bottle. Push the plunger to put air into the bottle, then take the syringe out of the bottle. Don't let the needle touch the insulin.

10. Get rid of air bubbles!
With the needle still in the bottle (and the bottle still upside-down), tap the side of the syringe gently. Any air bubbles will rise to the top. Then push the plunger in just enough to get rid of the air and the extra insulin. You should now have just the right amount of rapid- or short-acting insulin in the syringe.

11. Double check.
Make sure you have the right amount of rapid- or short-acting (clear) insulin in your syringe. Then take the needle out of the bottle.

12. Draw up your cloudy insulin.
(If you're only drawing clear, skip this step) Stick the needle in the top of the bottle of intermediate- or long-acting (cloudy) insulin. Turn the bottle and syringe upside down. Then pull out the plunger to measure out the exact amount that you need. Remember that the total dose in the syringe will be adding "clear + cloudy".



14. Humongous air bubble alert!
Do you have a huge air bubble that you can't get out without pushing out insulin?

13. Watch for air bubbles.
With the needle still in the bottle (and the bottle still upside-down), tap the side of the syringe gently. Any air bubbles will rise to the top. If you can get air bubbles out without pushing out insulin, do so.



14.B "NO":
Then go on.

14.A "YES":
Start over. Sorry, but having an air bubble in the syringe changes the dose. And it's not good to inject large air bubbles into yourself. So pitch your syringe and try again.



15. Make sure.
Double-check that you have the right amount of intermediate- or long-acting (cloudy) insulin in your syringe. Then take the needle out of the bottle.

16. Pinch an inch.
With one hand, pinch about an inch of skin at your injection site. Pinching makes sure you don't inject into a muscle. That hurts a lot more and also changes the amount of time it takes for the insulin to work.

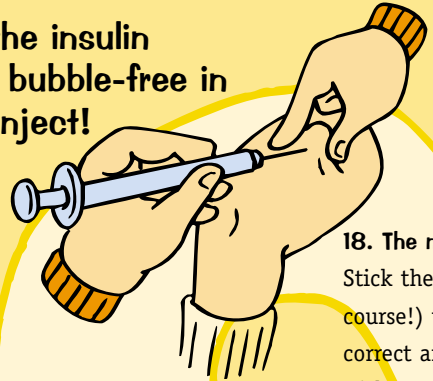
17. Get a grip.
Keep pinching your skin with one hand. With your other hand, hold the syringe like a pencil. Look at the needle to make sure it's angled correctly for injection. (What angle you inject at depends on how tough your skin is, among other things. Go with what your doctor or diabetes educator taught you.)

18. The main event.
Stick the needle in (gently, of course!) under the skin at the correct angle. Press the plunger with your thumb in a gentle, steady motion until the insulin is gone. You may want to experiment to see whether injecting the insulin a little slower or a little faster may be more comfortable for you. Once you have your "ideal speed," stick to it for maximum comfort!

19. Almost done!
When the syringe is empty, pull out the needle at the same angle you put it in. Press the injection site gently for a few seconds to prevent the insulin from leaking. (If leaking insulin is a problem for you, see "I'm leaking!" later on in this chapter for some tips.)

20. Clean up.
Throw out your syringe in the proper place (see "Syringe Safety" later in this chapter). Then put your diabetes supplies away.

The crowd goes wild!
You've just given yourself an insulin shot successfully—which proves that you're smart and brave. Give yourself a pat on the back! Becoming a full-fledged diabetes wizard can't be far behind!



Okay, now you've got the insulin drawn up correctly and bubble-free in your syringe. Time to inject!