Insulin Tips for Better Diabetes Management

Storage and Use

Insulin Storage

- Protect insulin from extreme hot and cold
- Always keep insulin away from direct light or heat. Do not store it near heater vents, ovens, radiators or sunny windows
- Never leave insulin in a closed car during very warm or cold months

Un-OPENED vials or pens:
- Are best stored in the refrigerator until the expiration date
- Never store in the freezer

OPENED vials:
- May be kept at room temperature (less than 86 degrees) for 28-30 days. No matter how much is left in the vial toss it out after that time and open a new bottle.
  - EXCEPT--Levemir and NPH, Novolin 70/30 can be kept for 42 days

OPENED pens:
- May be kept at room temperature anywhere from 10-42 days. No matter how much is left in the pen, toss it out and open a new pen.
  - Humalog Mix 75/25, Humulin 70/30, Novolin 70/30 for 10 days
  - Novolin N, Novolog Mix 70/30 for 14 days
  - Apidra, Humalog, Novolog, Lantus and Toujeo for 28 days
  - Levemir can be kept for 42 days
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Insulin Use

For best results using insulin, remember to:

- Mark your vial or pen with a permanent marker with the date it was opened
- Rotate your injection sites
- Avoid areas that feel hard, tender or that look red
- Always carry fast-acting sugar (glucose tabs or hard candy)
- Consider carrying a wallet card with instructions on how to treat low blood sugar
- Always wear a medical alert emblem (bracelet, necklace, watch tag) and a medical ID card that states you have diabetes and are on insulin.

Insulin Troubleshooting

There are two ways to tell when insulin is no longer any good:

- a change in appearance
- poor performance

Change in appearance of insulin:

- Cloudy when it is supposed to be clear
- Looks stringy
- Has changed in color
- Is supposed to be cloudy but it has clumps, even after rolling it between your palms

Expect poor performance of insulin when:

- Your vial/pen has been open for longer than the recommended days
- You have a lot of punctures in the rubber stopper because you take very small doses of insulin and you're getting close to the end of the bottle
- Also, if you're going to be outdoors for a while in hot weather, store your insulin in an insulated case

If you think your insulin has gone bad, DON'T take any chances: throw the bottle away and open a new one. If you have any questions, call the Disease Management Nurse and ask for assistance.