

Medication Information

Fast Acting Insulin

Names for this insulin are:

Humulin[®]-R

Novolin[®]ge Toronto

How fast and long does this insulin work to control blood sugar?

- Starts to work in 30 minutes to 1 hour.
- Maximum effect between 2 to 4 hours.
- Lasts 5 to 8 hours.

How to take this insulin

Follow your doctor's or diabetes care provider's advice on when to take this insulin. It is best to inject fast acting insulin 30 minutes before you eat a meal. You can inject up to 15 minutes after eating a meal.

Your diabetes care provider or pharmacist will show you how and where to inject this insulin.

How long is insulin safe to use?

- Always check the expiry date on the package before using. Never use expired insulin.
- After opening you must use it in 28 days or throw it out.
- You can store opened insulin at room temperature or in the fridge.
- **Store unopened insulin in the fridge.**
- Opened insulin does not have to be kept in the fridge.
- Never keep insulin close to a stove, microwave or in a vehicle where it may be too hot or too cold. This destroys insulin.

While you are taking this medication you may notice:

- low blood sugar

Some signs of low blood sugar are:

- dizziness
- clammy skin
- cold sweat
- tiredness
- slurred speech
- shakiness
- headache
- mood change

Check your blood sugar if you feel any of these symptoms.

If your blood sugar is below 4.0 mmol/L:

1. Take 15 grams of a fast acting carbohydrate right away.
Taking 15 grams of a fast acting carbohydrate will raise your blood sugar quickly. Examples of 15 grams of fast acting carbohydrates are:
 - Chew glucose or dextrose tablets. Read the package to know how many you need to chew to make 15 grams **or**
 - Drink 175 ml or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup orange juice **or**
 - Drink 175 ml or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup regular pop
2. Wait 15 minutes and check your blood sugar again.
3. If your blood sugar is still below 4.0 mmol/L, treat again with 15 grams of a fast acting carbohydrate listed above.
4. Repeat these steps until your blood sugar is in your target level.
5. If your next meal or snack is more than 1 hour away, you need to eat $\frac{1}{2}$ sandwich or 6 crackers with cheese to keep your blood sugar greater than 4.0 mmol/L.

You can talk to your diabetes care provider or pharmacist about other fast acting carbohydrates to carry with you to prevent or treat low blood sugar.

What do I do when I am sick?

- Take your diabetes medication.
- Eat your usual meals and snacks (if you have snacks), at your usual time if you can.
- Test your blood sugar level at least every 4 hours.
- Talk to your health care provider about how to deal with sick days.



What if I am too sick to eat?

If you are unable to eat your usual meals and snack(s), have one of these every hour:

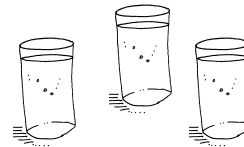
- ½ cup (125 ml) juice **or**
- ½ cup (125 ml) regular pop **or**
- ½ cup (125 ml) regular Jell-O **or**
- 1 whole popsicle



You may need to test your blood sugar more often.

Drink lots of sugar free fluids such as:

- water
- clear broth
- tea
- diet pop



Contact your doctor or diabetes care provider right away if you:

- have continued low blood sugars
- vomit more than 2 times in 12 hours

Drive safe

When you take insulin you are at risk of having a low blood sugar while driving. If you have a low blood sugar while driving, you are a danger to yourself and others.

Your blood sugar should be over 5.0 mmol/L to drive.

Talk to your diabetes care provider or pharmacist for more information on how to be prepared and stay safe.