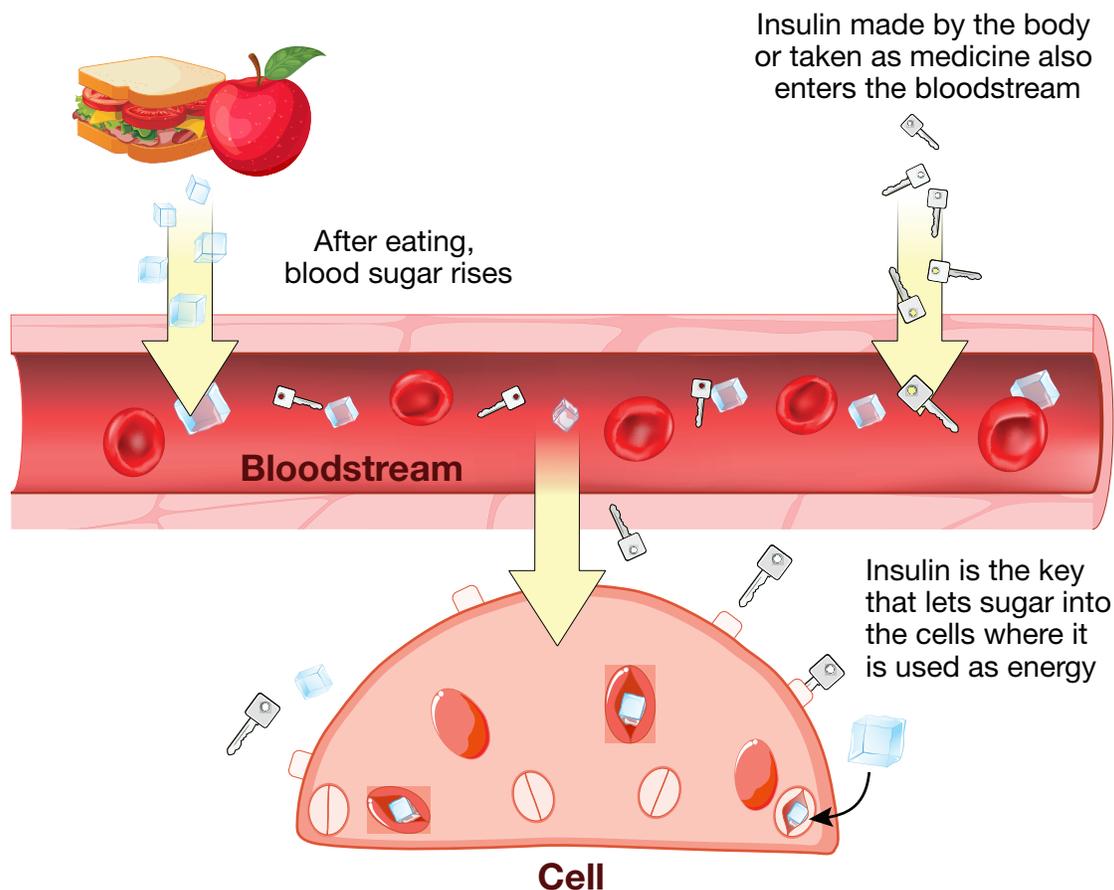


Insulin and Diabetes

Insulin is a hormone that your body naturally produces. It helps your body use glucose, a type of sugar, for energy. When you eat, your body breaks food down into sugar and sends it into the blood. Then, insulin helps move the sugar from the blood into your cells where it is used to fuel your body and keep you well.



Why Do I Need Insulin?

Taking insulin or other diabetes medicines is often part of treating diabetes. When you have diabetes, your body does not make insulin or has trouble using the insulin it does make. Insulin cannot be taken as a pill, so most people who are prescribed insulin get the insulin they need by injecting it with an insulin pen or syringe, or by using an insulin pump. There are different types of insulin. Some work very quickly and are taken with meals. Others work more slowly and are used just once or twice per day. Taking insulin can help you manage your blood sugar levels and meet your blood sugar goals. In this way, insulin can help you feel more energized and help you stay healthy. Most importantly, insulin will help prevent diabetes complications.

Continued on next page

What Should I Know About Insulin?

- Because of their different uses, many people take more than one type of insulin to meet their blood sugar goals.

Ask your doctor to explain what types of insulin you are prescribed and how they need to be taken. At your next appointment, you can ask to practice correctly giving injections.

- How and when you take insulin is unique to you and can change over time.

Ask your doctor to discuss the type, amount and frequency of the injections of insulin you need based on your current lifestyle and recent blood sugars.

- Insulin will lower your blood sugar level whether you have eaten or not and can increase the chances of low blood sugar. Eating regular meals is very important when taking insulin.

Ask your doctor about the best ways for you to prevent low blood sugar and what to do if you have low blood sugar.

Common Myths

Myth Insulin causes diabetes complications or death.

Truth Insulin helps delay or prevent diabetes complications. Sometimes people wait too long to start insulin after it is needed, which can be too late to prevent complications.

Myth If I have to take insulin, it is because my diabetes is getting worse.

Truth Taking insulin does not mean that you have failed to manage your diabetes. Because diabetes is a progressive disease, eventually the pancreas is just not able to keep up with the body's need for insulin. Taking insulin when it is needed will make it easier to meet your blood sugar goals and stay healthy.

Myth The longer it takes me to start using insulin, the better.

Truth The best time to take insulin is when it can help you meet your goals. Work with your doctor to identify your goals and decide if insulin can help.