



## Safe Insulin Storage and Handling

Insulin is a medication that is sensitive to temperature. When it is not stored or handled properly, it may lose potency or strength. Insulin used at a lower strength will lead to poor blood glucose control.

### Opened insulin vials and pens should be stored:

- at **room temperature**, which is more comfortable to inject
- protected from direct heat and light
- for a maximum of **28 days** and then discarded. Check your specific product information for guidelines, e.g.:

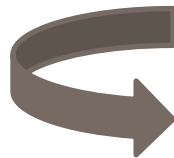
*Levemir can be stored at room temperature for 42 days.*

*Novolin N, Humulin N, and "pre-mixed" insulin penfills can be stored between 10-14 days.*



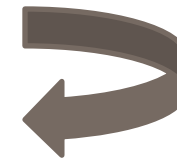
### Unopened insulin vials or cartridges should be stored in:

- in the **refrigerator** (2-8° C or 36-46° F)
- away from extreme cold
- use until the expiry date printed on the label



### Discard insulin that has been:

- directly exposed to extreme sunlight or heat (temperatures higher than 30° C/86° F)
- frozen
- open for more than 28 days



### Remember!

- ✓ **Write the date** you open the insulin on the vial, along with the end date (28 days later).
- ✓ Keep an **additional, unopened** package of insulin in the refrigerator.



### Questions?

Speak with your health care provider, a diabetes educator, or pharmacist about your insulin; Contact the Canadian Diabetes Association at 1-800 BANTING (226-8464); or Call our “Ask Elizabeth” support line at: 1-877-ASK-ELIZ weekdays from 8:30am -4:30pm EST.

### Before each injection:

- Inspect your insulin for changes like clumping, frosting, precipitation, or discoloration, which may mean a loss of potency or effectiveness. Discard the insulin if you see any of these changes.
- Check the product information, talk to your pharmacist, or ask another member of your diabetes health care team about using your specific insulin product.

### How long can insulin be used once it has been opened?

All opened insulin, whether stored in the refrigerator or at room temperature, should be used within 28 days. Always check the directions and expiration date printed on the label from the manufacturer.

### How should insulin be stored at school?

Insulin kept at school may not be finished before the maximum in-use storage time (maximum of 28 days for most types of insulin). Carefully label and date insulin to ensure that it is being used within 28 days of opening.

Routinely check expiration dates on extra vials or cartridges of insulin stored at school.

### Insulin and hot weather

Keep insulin cool in very hot weather by using a cooler bag, insulated pouch or reusable ice packs. Avoid direct contact between your insulin and an ice pack. Never leave insulin in a vehicle.

Check the storage recommendations on the product information for your type of insulin.