

## Info on shortages of insulins & Diabetes

Unfortunately, there continues to be new and ongoing shortages of some pre-filled pen insulins. People with all types of Diabetes using these as their treatment may be affected.

Present ones affected are **pre-filled FlexTouch** pens for **Fiasp** 100units/ml and **Tresiba** 100units/ml.

It is important that you do not stop taking or reduce your insulin as it can lead to serious problems with your health both in the short and long term.

### **What happens next?**

If you use pre-filled **Flextouch** pen versions of either of the above, and need to order more soon, you may need to change either your insulin pen, or the type of insulin you use. Your healthcare team can discuss this with you.

1. **Switch to cartridges:** There are cartridge versions of both insulins available to use. To use cartridges, you will also need a Novopen6 to use them with, which will need to be prescribed and likely ordered in. Your GP can prescribe these, at present, DSN teams do not have these to give out.
2. **Switch insulins:** If your pharmacist is struggling to get hold of these cartridge insulins, you may need to switch to other types of insulins for the short term, which is not ideal, but it will keep you safe in the meantime. There are lots of alternative insulins and your healthcare team can discuss this with you.

If you do not have enough insulin in your body your blood sugars can elevate very quickly, which leads to thirst, tiredness and needing to go to the toilet more often. It can also lead to you developing ketones, which can cause your blood to become acidic. This is a medical emergency, which will often present with stomach pains, nausea or being sick and feeling short of breath.

### **What can I do?**

- ✓ Ensure that you order supplies of insulin in good time and recognise early when you are low, so that you are not left without any – this gives you time to speak to a healthcare professional about potential alternatives and sort out extra devices you may need.
- ✓ Do not stockpile insulins or bulk order as this creates more issues with shortages.
- ✓ Explain to your GP surgery that you have diabetes that depends on insulin treatment, and you cannot wait a long time for an appointment for an alternative prescription.
- ✓ If you get diabetes care from a local Diabetes Specialist team you can contact them to ask for help from a Diabetes Specialist Nurse if you have their contact details
- ✓ Keep a blood ketone meter at home with blood ketone testing strips which are in date to use during times of illness.
- ✓ You can contact 111 in the event of an emergency and being without any insulin.

## Further information

### *Reusable Pen devices for corresponding cartridges:*

Company	Name	Prescribing info
Novo Nordisk Ltd	NovoPen 6	hypodermic insulin injection pen reusable for 3ml cartridge 1 unit dial up / range 1-60 units
Novo Nordisk Ltd	NovoPen 6 Echo plus	hypodermic insulin injection pen reusable for 3ml cartridge 0.5unit dial up / range 1-30 units
Sanofi	AllStar Pro	hypodermic insulin injection pen reusable for 3ml cartridge 1 unit dial up / range 1-80 units Blue
Eli Lilly and Company	HumaPen Savvio	hypodermic insulin injection pen reusable for 3ml cartridge 1 unit dial up / range 1-60 units

### *Alternative rapid acting insulins (mealtime):*

Company	Brand Name	Prescribing info
Novo Nordisk	NovoRapid	Penfill 100units/ml solution for injection 3ml cartridges (will need reusable pen) and FlexPen 100units/ml solution for injection 3ml pre-filled pens
Eli Lilly and Company	Humalog	100units/ml solution for injection 3ml pre-filled Kwikpens and 3ml cartridges (will need reusable pen)
Eli Lilly and Company	Lyumjev	100units/ml solution for injection 3ml pre-filled Kwikpens and 3ml cartridges (will need reusable pen)
Sanofi	Trurapi	100units/ml solution for injection 3ml pre-filled Solostar pens and 3ml cartridges (will need reusable pen)
Sanofi	Apidra	100units/ml solution for injection 3ml pre-filled Solostar pens and 3ml cartridges (will need reusable pen)
Sanofi	Admelog	available as a vial, 3ml cartridge (will need reusable pen) and 3ml prefilled disposable pen

### *Alternative longer acting basal insulins (once a day):*

Company	Brand Name	Prescribing Info
Sanofi	Toujeo	300units/ml solution for injection 1.5ml pre-filled SoloStar disposable devices
Sanofi	Lantus	100units/ml solution for injection, 3ml cartridge (will need reusable pen), 3ml Vials and prefilled 3ml SoloStar prefilled pen
Eli Lilly and Company Ltd	Abasaglar	KwikPen 100units/ml solution for injection 3ml pre-filled pens, and 3ml cartridges (will need reusable pen)

Further Information	Website link:
DKA / Sick day advice	<a href="https://www.edendiabetes.com/resources">https://www.edendiabetes.com/resources</a>

### *References*

Insulin information taken from DSN Forum UK Insulin Devices Comparison Chart available:

<https://www.diabetesspecialistnurseforumuk.co.uk/whats-new>

MHRA: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/medicines-shortages-regulatory-processes-to-manage-supply-disruptions>