

Information about changes to medicines or treatments on the NHS: Changes to prescribing of needles for pre-filled and reusable insulin pens

The NHS will be asking doctors to stop or greatly reduce the prescribing of some treatments. This is because the treatments are:

- Not as safe as other treatments OR
- Not as good (effective) as other treatments OR
- More expensive than other treatments that do the same thing.

This includes needles for insulin pens.

This document will explain why the changes are happening and where you can get more information and support.

Which needles for insulin pens are affected?

There are many different types of needles available for pre-filled and reusable insulin pens. They vary greatly in cost, with no significant difference in how well they work so it is important not to waste limited NHS money on insulin needles that are more expensive for no extra benefit.

They also vary in length and the 4mm needles are considered safer as they reduce the risk of the insulin being injected into the muscle, instead of under the skin.

Why will some needles for insulin pens not be prescribed anymore?

Needles for insulin pens should be an appropriate length for safety reasons and should represent good value. Needles that don't represent good value should no longer be prescribed.

What options are available instead?

There are lots of alternative needles for pre-filled and reusable insulin pens available on the NHS that represent good value for money.

Your doctor will talk to you about the different options so that you can come to a joint decision about which needles are best for you and how to use a different size needles if you need to switch to shorter ones.

Where can I find more information and support?

- You can speak to your local pharmacist, GP or the person who prescribed the medication to you.
- Your local patient group.
- The Patients Association can also offer support and advice: www.patients-association.org.uk/ or call 020 8423 8999
- The Forum for Injection Technique (FIT) <http://www.fit4diabetes.com/united-kingdom/>

Find out more about the medicines that are being stopped or reduced:
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/medicines/items-which-should-not-be-routinely-prescribed/>

If you have any questions about prescribing of needles for insulin pens email them to: england.medicines@nhs.net