

Managing Gestational Diabetes: Preparing a Mixed-Dose Syringe

You may need to take insulin to treat your gestational diabetes. There are two types of insulins—longer acting and shorter acting. You may need to mix the two in the same syringe.

First, get your supplies ready. You will need a syringe, alcohol swabs, and your insulin bottles. Let's prepare your syringe now.

Step 1. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and clean, running water and dry them. Step 2. If you are using an insulin that needs to be mixed, mix it gently, but thoroughly about 15 to 20 times. Don't shake it because that will put air into the insulin.

Step 3. Wipe the tops of both insulin bottles with alcohol swabs. Step 4. Pull the plunger of the syringe back to the amount of longer-acting insulin you need. Inject that air into the bottle of longer-acting insulin. Do not begin drawing the insulin yet. Instead, pull the syringe straight out. At this point your syringe is empty.

Step 5. Now pull the plunger back to the amount of shorter acting insulin you need. Inject that air into the bottle of shorter acting insulin. Leave the needle in. Turn the bottle upside-down so the insulin covers it. Then pull the plunger back to draw out the correct amount of shorter acting insulin. At this point your syringe only holds shorter acting insulin.

Step 6. Now for the longer-acting insulin. Stick the needle into the longer-acting insulin bottle. Turn the bottle upside down. Make sure the needle is covered with insulin.

Step 7. Carefully pull the plunger back to draw out the correct amount of longer-acting insulin. Remember your syringe already holds the units of shorter acting insulin.

You'll need to pull the plunger back to the total units of insulin shorter acting plus longer acting. At this point your syringe holds both shorter acting and longer acting insulin.

Now you're ready to inject.

Let's try that again. Wash your hands with soap and clean, running water. Pull the plunger back to the amount of longer-acting insulin you need. Inject that air into the bottle. Don't start drawing the insulin yet. Instead, pull the syringe straight out.

Pull the plunger back to the amount of shorter acting insulin you need. Inject air into that bottle. Leave the needle in and turn the bottle upside-down so the insulin completely covers it. Then draw out the correct amount of insulin.

Mix cloudy insulin. Wipe the tops of both insulin bottles with an alcohol swab. Stick the needle into the longer-acting insulin bottle and turn it upside-down. Make sure the needle is covered with insulin. Carefully pull the plunger back to the total units of shorter and longer acting insulin you need. Now you're ready to inject.

If you have any questions about preparing a mixed dose injection, talk to your healthcare provider.