

Are you making this mistake when injecting insulin?

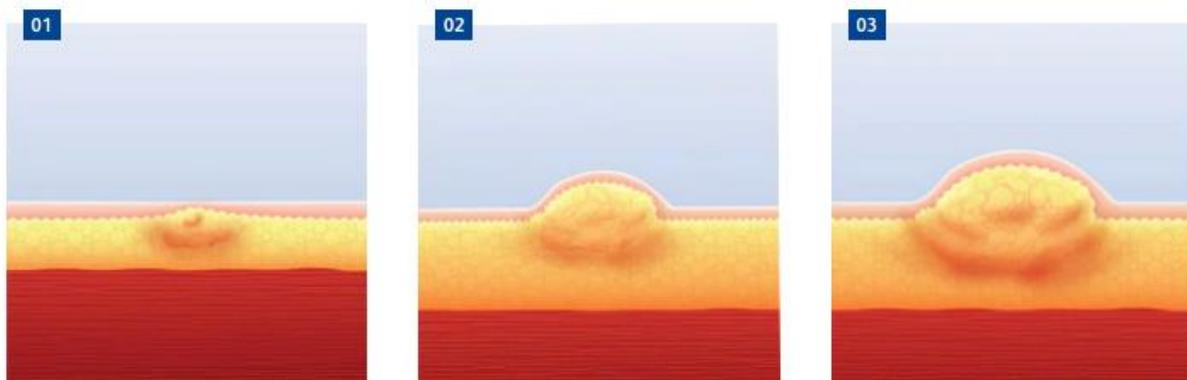
When you live with diabetes, you know that there are all kinds of things that affect your blood sugar: food, medication, exercise, hormones, the weather - the list goes on. But did you know that the way you inject can also have a big impact on your blood sugar?

Understanding lipohypertrophy

Here's a big word we should all understand: *lipohypertrophy*. Take a look at the places you inject frequently - your stomach or thighs, for example. Can you see any fatty lumps and bumps under the surface of your skin? That's lipohypertrophy (lipo for short), and it happens when you inject into the same spot over and over. About [two thirds \(64%\) of people with Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes](#) have it.

Every time you visit your diabetes doctor, they should inspect your injection sites to look for these bumps. You can also look closely and feel your injection sites (the places you inject) at home. Next time you visit your doctor, ask them to show you what exactly you're looking for: it can be a soft mound or a hard lump under the skin.

They can vary in size and shape - from that of a small garden pea to a tennis ball.



[Image credit](#)

How lipohypertrophy affects blood sugar

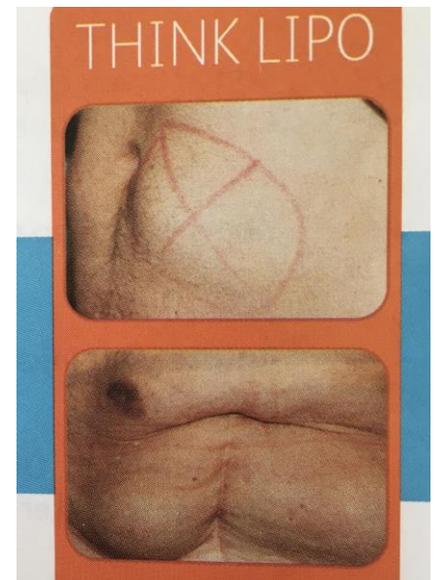
So why is it a problem, and how does it affect your blood sugar? It can be tempting to inject into the same area over and over again, because if you have lipo it doesn't hurt to inject - the area becomes less sensitive. The problem is that if you inject into these bumps, your insulin won't be absorbed as well. Studies have shown that lipo reduces insulin absorption [by up to 25%](#)! That means that you're getting a quarter less insulin than you injected. This leads to unexplained high blood sugar, using more insulin and less glucose control - all the things we're trying to avoid. Being aware of lipo and discussing it with your doctor can make a big difference to your blood sugar control.

How to heal lipohypertrophy

Prevention is the best way to heal lipo: if you notice lumps and bumps under your skin, make sure you don't inject into them.

Here are some more helpful tips:

1. Always use purified human insulins
2. Rotate your injection sites with each injection so that the injection site can heal: never inject into the same place twice in a row.
3. Use larger injection zones: don't focus all your injections in a small area of your stomach or thigh.
4. Don't re-use needles: sharp needles will minimise the pain of injections and reduce lipo.



Balancing blood sugar is one of the hardest parts about living with diabetes. It's why we try to [eat the right food](#), [exercise](#), and [manage our health](#). It's easy to forget that the little things we do every day - like injecting in the right place, and changing needles - can also have an impact. Now that you know all about lipo, there's one less thing you'll have to worry about when injecting insulin!

This article was brought to you with unconditional scientific support by [BD](#).

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