

Insulin Needle Formulary October 2019

The second round of the NHS Consultation on Low Value Medicines recommended that insulin needles costing more than £5 per 100 did not represent value for the NHS and advises prescribers in primary care not to initiate insulin pen needles costing more than £5 for any new patient with diabetes. Furthermore CCG's are advised to deprescribe insulin pen needles that cost more than £5 per 100 needles.

Insulin Pen needles are available in a complete range of sizes from 4mm to 12mm with costs varying from £2.75 to £13.02 for 100..

Different needles will fit different pens; however most pen needles will fit all major insulin delivery pen devices currently available. Prescribers should ensure that any prescribed needle is compatible with the insulin pen that the patient is currently using.

Morecambe Bay Area Prescribing Committee has reviewed the range of needles prescribed across the practices of Morecambe Bay CCG and produced this guidance to rationalise prescribing to promote the use of the most cost effective needles.

First line

GlucorX Carepoint Insulin pen needles as a first choice £2.75 per 100.

Compatibility chart

<https://www.glucorx.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/pdf/GlucorX%20FinePoint%20Compatibility%20Chart.pdf?UNLID=208433465201911121931>

Second Line

Mylife Penfine Classic £3.55 per 100

Compatibility chart

<https://www.mylife-diabetescare.com/en-GB/products/pen-needles/mylife-penfine-classic.html?UNLID=208433465201911121931>

Optimal Insulin Needle Sizes

The Forum for Injection Technique (FIT) UK provides evidence-based best practice recommendations for people with diabetes who are using injectable therapies and for clinicians who care for people with diabetes using injectable therapies. Their recommendations are that patients can achieve the best possible health outcomes by ensuring that the correct dose of medication is delivered to the correct injection site, using the correct injection technique.

Key Messages:

- 4mm needles with the smallest diameter (higher gauge number) are suitable for patients with insulin doses less than 50 units
- Patients on needles longer than 5mm should be reviewed and changed to a shorter needle length if their insulin dose is less than 50 units.
- Patients with insulin doses above 50 units may require insulin needles of 6mm.
- Shorter needles are suitable for all people regardless of their BMI; they may not require a lifted skin fold and can be given at 90 degrees to the skin
- For children and adolescents there is no clinical reason for using needles longer than 6mm
- Using needles of shorter length (6mm or less) helps to prevent inadvertent IM injection of insulin.

- IM injection of all human insulin should be avoided as this can result in unpredictable blood glucose levels and severe hypoglycaemia.
- Advice regarding monitoring blood glucose levels following a change to a shorter needle should be given as well as using up any existing needles before changing to a shorter needle to reduce wastage.
- For patients currently using longer pen needle lengths (8, 10 12mm), it is advisable to change to a shorter needle length (6mm or less) **but only after discussion with a healthcare professional, to ensure they receive advice on the correct injection technique.**
- If leakage of insulin occurs with shorter needles, injection technique should be reviewed. The individual should count slowly to 10 seconds before withdrawing the needle. If doses of more than 60 units are to be given, the dose could be split and given at different sites.
- All needles are for single use only.
- If patients occasionally experience sharp pain on injection they should be reassured that the needle may have touched a nerve ending which happens randomly and will not cause any damage.

Practices should ensure that any selected needles are compatible with the insulin pen the patient is using.

Safe Disposal of Used Needles

- Ensure patients are educated about the safe disposal of needles via a sharps bin.
- Sharps bins can be prescribed on FP10 and are suitable for insulin needles and lancets.
- Advise patients to return full sharps bins to the prescribing GP practice or by making arrangements with local council.
- Practice staff should not handle these and patients advised to place their returned sharps bins in the larger practice bins.

Insulin Pen Needles with a cost less than £5 per 100

- As prices for some needle sizes in the same brand name may exceed £5.00 per 100 needles, the table below is provided as a guide to the needle sizes available at or below the indicated threshold price. (Drug Tariff October 2019)

Name of Needle	Insulin Needle Sizes						Review these sizes to consider shorter length needle, as above			
	4mm/31g	4mm/32g	5mm/31g	5mm/32g	6mm/31g	6mm/32g	8mm/31g	10mm/29 g	10mm/30g	12mm/29g
GlucoRx Carepoint Cost per 100	Y £2.75		Y £2.75		Y £2.75		Y £2.75	Y £2.75		Y £2.75
Mylife Penfine Classic Cost per 100		Y £3.55	Y £3.55			Y £3.55	Y £3.55			
4Sure Cost per 100	Y £3.95	Y £3.95	Y £3.95	Y £3.95	Y £3.95	Y £3.95	Y £3.95			
BD Viva Cost per 100		Y £3.59	Y £3.59		Y £3.59		Y £3.59			
Carefine Cost per 100		Y £2.75	Y £2.75		Y £2.75		Y £2.75			
GlucoRx Carepoint Ultra Cost per 100		Y £2.75								
GlucoRx Finepoint Cost per 100	Y £4.50		Y £4.50		Y £4.50		Y £4.50	Y £4.50		Y £4.50
GlucoRx Finepoint Ultra Cost per 100		Y £4.50								
Microdot Droplet Cost per 100		Y £4.95			Y £4.95		Y £4.95			
Microdot Max Cost per 100		Y £2.74			Y £2.74					
Neon Verifine Cost per 100	Y £4.50		Y £4.50		Y £4.50		Y £4.50		Y £4.50	Y £4.50
Neon Verifine Ultra Cost per 100		Y £4.50								
Omnican Fine Cost per 100		Y £3.95		Y £3.95		Y £3.95				
PROFine Cost per 100		Y £3.80	Y £3.80		Y £3.80		Y £3.80			Y £3.80
TriCare		Y	Y		Y		Y			

Review Date October 2021

Cost per 100		£3.95	£3.95		£3.95		£3.95			
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