

Formulary Guidelines: Advice on prescribing pen needles for insulin and GLP-1 pens

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The purpose of this fact sheet is to provide guidance to clinicians when prescribing pen needles.

Following [national guidance from NHS England](#), insulin pen needles that cost >£5 per 100 needles are not recommended for use. The following are approved by specialist teams across Cornwall as preferred options.

First line choices for universal pen needles

Insupen Original (4mm/32 gauge, 4mm/33 gauge, 5mm/31 gauge,) £2.49 for 100 needles

Microdot Max (4mm/32 gauge,) £2.74 for 100 needles

GlucorX CarePoint and CarePoint ultra (4mm/31 gauge, 5mm/31-gauge, Ultra 4mm/32 gauge). £2.75 for 100 needles

Second line choice for universal pen needles

It is recommended that these are only prescribed where there is a specific need for a 5 bevelled needle due to the cost.

GlucorX Finepoint (4mm/31g, 5mm/31g) £4.50 for 100 needles

Safety needles for insulin pens.

Microdot dual safety needles are now the first-choice safety needle for adults having insulin administered by a third party such as District Nursing teams and Care home staff.

All children who attend school should be prescribed BD Autosshield needles to minimise the risk of needle stick injuries. These needles should be added to repeat prescriptions in addition to the universal needles, as the Autosshield are required only for use in school, not for home use.

Further good practice points

- All needles are for single use only.
- Insulin 4mm pen needles are recommended in the NHSE guidance [here](#).
- If leakage of insulin occurs with shorter needles, injection technique should be reviewed. The individual should count slowly to ten 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.
- Sharps should be disposed of in a sharps disposal box, or some people prefer to use a clipper, which then itself needs to be disposed of in a sharps disposal box.
- Ensure patients are educated about the safe disposal of lancets via a sharps disposal box.
- Sharpsguard yellow one litre (87p per container) / Sharpsafe yellow one litre (£1.13 per container) are suitable lancets and are available on FP10. Needle clipping devices are prescribable at a cost of £1.61.
- Patients should register with the council for sharps collection via [their website](#) or by calling 0300 1234 141.