



Glucagon

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Glucagon is a hormone produced by the pancreas. It raises the blood sugar by making the liver release stored glucose. In cases of hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) when the person is unconscious or unable to cooperate by eating or drinking something, glucagon should be injected to raise the blood sugar closer to normal levels. If you take insulin, your family, friends, co-workers, and exercise partners should learn how to give you a shot of glucagon. You will need a prescription to purchase the glucagon kit. Ask your doctor about glucagon injection if you are taking insulin. Whenever possible, it is important to test blood sugar before giving glucagon.

Glucagon is available in a package with the supplies that are needed to take it. This package is called a Glucagon Emergency Kit. You need a prescription to buy glucagon or a Glucagon Emergency Kit. Ask your doctor for a prescription. The emergency kit contains a bottle of glucagon (dry powder) and a syringe filled with special liquid.

How To Use The Glucagon Emergency Kit:

1. Open white plastic box.
2. Remove small vial containing glucagon and glass syringe from box.
3. Flip off top of glucagon vial. This will expose rubber stopper.
4. Pull firmly on gray rubber sheath covering needle of syringe until it comes off.



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5. Hold syringe like a dart or pencil and push needle through rubber stopper of vial.
6. Push plunger until contents of syringe are injected into vial.
7. Remove the syringe from vial and carefully place it down so the needle doesn't touch anything.
8. Gently roll the vial which now contains glucagon & diluting solution in your hands until glucagon dissolves totally.
 - Glucagon should not be used unless the solution is clear and of waterlike consistency.
 - Glucagon should be injected immediately after mixing.
9. Push needle through rubber stopper again. Turn so bottle is on top.
10. **Keep tip of needle in fluid.** Pull plunger back until vial is empty. (You will have to pull bottle up gently to ensure that tip of needle remains in fluid).
11. When you have emptied vial as much as possible, remove syringe and put vial aside.
12. Tap out any air bubbles holding syringe with needle pointed up. Push up on plunger to expel air.

Remember to check the expiration date periodically. Obtain a new kit before the original one expires.



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TO INJECT GLUCAGON

1. Pinch up skin of abdomen, back of upper arm, or front or outer portion of upper thigh.
2. Wipe area with alcohol swab.
3. Hold syringe like a dart or pencil and quickly push needle into top of mound at **90° angle**.
4. Push plunger down with a firm, steady motion. Inject entire contents of syringe.
5. Remove needle and wipe skin again.
6. Do not recap needle. Dispose of syringe as discussed with your nurse.
7. Turn the patient on his/her side. When an unconscious person awakens, he/she may vomit. Turning the patient on his/her side will prevent choking.
 - The person usually regains consciousness within **15-20 minutes** after the injection is given. While you are waiting for the person to regain consciousness, call your local emergency number. It may be necessary to have the person taken to the emergency room for further treatment. Also, notify patient's doctor promptly. A doctor should be told whenever severe hypoglycemic reactions occur.
 - When the person is alert, (s)he should take the prescribed amount of fast acting carbohydrates followed by a longer acting carbohydrate or protein food. (Follow guidelines given in **Low Blood Sugar Handout**).