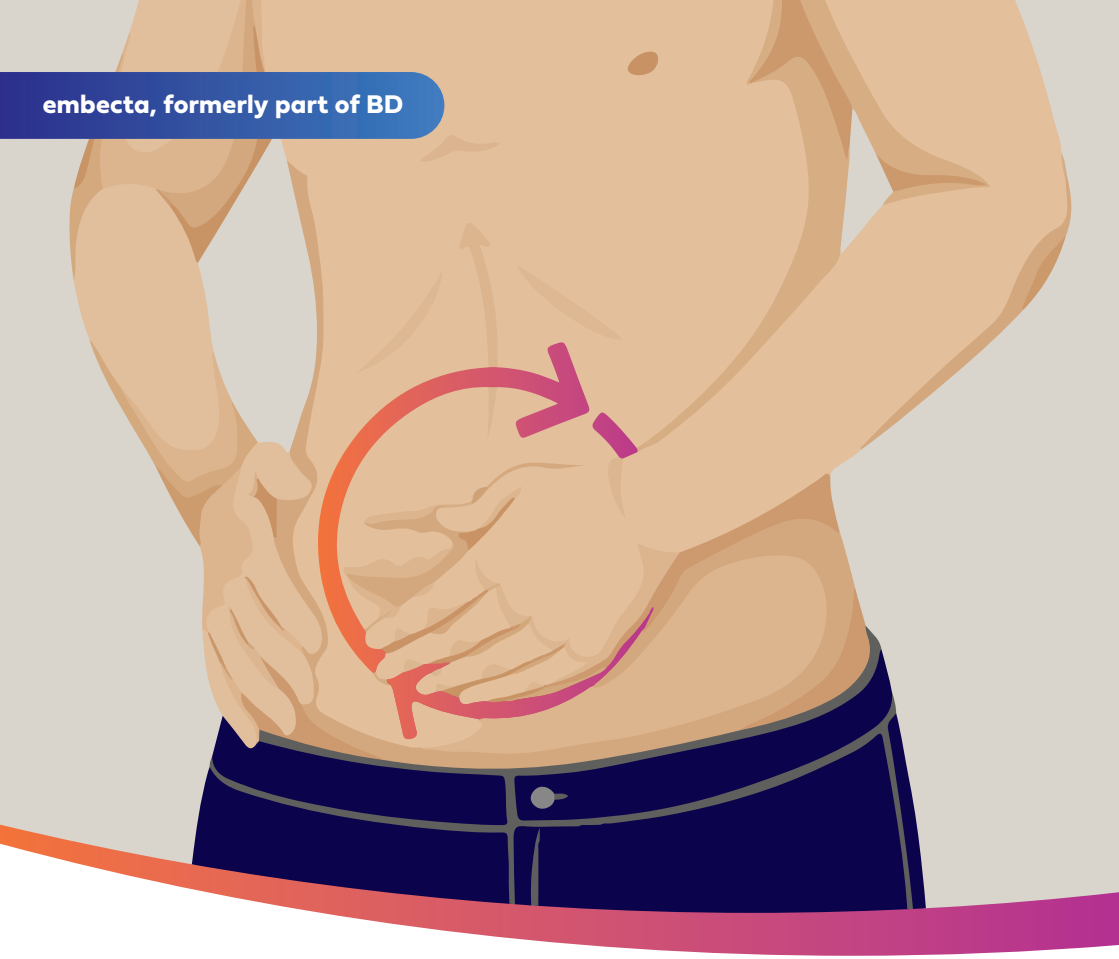

Insulin injections: getting it right

What you need to know about lipohypertrophy:
A guide for people who inject insulin

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What is lipohypertrophy?

Lipohypertrophy (lipo) is a thickened, rubbery swelling under the skin that can develop in people who inject insulin or other medications.

These lipo lumps may be soft or firm. You may not be able to see it, but when you press on your skin you should feel it.[1]

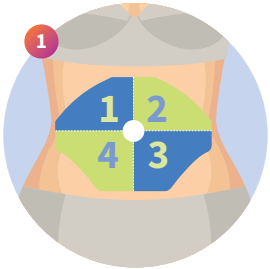
What happens if I inject into a lipo?

If you inject into a lipo, there may be a reduced and unpredictable absorption of insulin.[2]

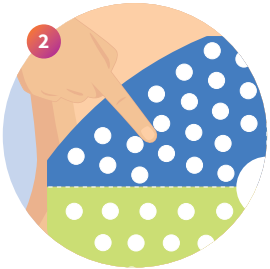
Diabetes specialists recommend two key ways to help reduce your risk of developing lipo:

Rotating

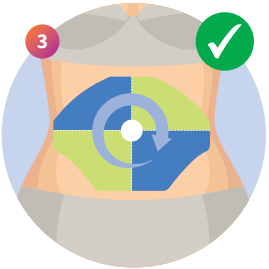
Don't stick to the same injection site. You can inject your insulin in your abdomen, buttocks, thighs and the backs of your arms.[2] Do not use a single injection site more frequently than every 4 weeks.[2] Ask your healthcare professional for a Injection Site rotation grid.



Choose an injection site and divide it into four quadrants (or halves when using thighs or buttocks).



Injections in each spot should be at least 1cm - or one finger width - from the last injection.



Rotate your sites regularly using abdomen, thigh, buttocks, and backs of arms if possible.

Using a new needle

Use a sterile, new needle with every injection.[2]
Use 4mm pen needles or the shortest needle length available to minimise the risk of accidental intramuscular injection.[2]

Detect

Look and feel for lipos around your injection sites. If you feel any lumps, talk to your healthcare professional.

Protect

Don't inject into a lipo.
Ask your healthcare professional to review your insulin dose.

Prevent

You can reduce your risk of lipo formation by rotating your injection position and using a new needle each time you inject.[1,2]

* Patients aged 2–6 or extremely lean adults may require a pinch-up.
** Check the Instructions for Use and/or your HealthCare Professional about proper injection technique.

What to do if you develop lipo

It is important to keep track of lipo sites, so you can avoid injecting into them. Use the grids to track the position of any lipos. Show the grids to your healthcare professional at your next appointment.

Contact your diabetes specialist or healthcare professional if you detect lipo

1. Blanco M, Hernández MT, Strauss KW, Amaya M. Prevalence and risk factors of lipohypertrophy in insulin-injecting patients with diabetes. Diabetes Metab. 2013;39(5):445-453.
2. Frid A., New Insulin Delivery Recommendations. Mayo Clinic Proceedings. Sept. 2016. 91 (9): 1231-1255.

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