

# Is the pump right for you?

An insulin pump can help you manage your diabetes by matching your insulin to your lifestyle. With a pump, you're not as tied to a rigid meal schedule, and you have more flexibility regarding your diet. Consider the following in deciding whether the pump is right for you.



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## Advantages of using a pump:

- Eliminates individual insulin injections.
- Delivers insulin more accurately than injections.
- Often improves glycated hemoglobin levels (HbA<sub>1c</sub>).
- Reduces the number of severe low blood glucose episodes.
- Eliminates the unpredictable effects of long-acting insulin because it delivers rapid- or short-acting insulin throughout the day.
- Allows you to exercise without having to eat large amounts of carbohydrates.

## Disadvantages:

- May result in weight gain.
- Can cause diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA) if the catheter slips out and you don't get insulin for a long period of time. (You'll need to carry backup syringes and insulin in case the infusion set gets clogged.)
- Is expensive if not fully covered by your insurance plan. A pump may cost as much as \$6,000, with supplies running from \$60 – \$80 a month. Many plans cover at least 80% of the cost.
- Might be bothersome if you don't like being attached to the device most of the time.
- Could require a hospital stay or a full day in an outpatient center for training.

**Sources:** 1. American Diabetes Association. "Insulin pumps." [www.diabetes.org/type-1-diabetes/insulin-pumps.jsp](http://www.diabetes.org/type-1-diabetes/insulin-pumps.jsp) (26 Apr. 2005). 2. American Diabetes Association. "Five things you should know before pumping." 2004. [www.diabetes.org/diabetes-forecast/may2004/pump.jsp](http://www.diabetes.org/diabetes-forecast/may2004/pump.jsp) (26 Apr. 2005).

