

Surrey Heartlands Diabetes Injectable Pen Needles Formulary

- Surrey Heartlands recommends the use of **pen needles <£3/100**, in line with [NHSE guidance](#) (excluding safety needles-see below). **Current choices from Drug Tariff May 2023 include:**

Insupen Original - £2.49/100	Microdot Max £2.74/100	GlucoRx Carepoint - £2.75/100	GlucoRx CarePoint Ultra - £2.75/100	Greenfine - £2.75/100
5mm/6mm/8mm – 31 gauge 4mm/6mm/8mm- 32 gauge 4mm/33 gauge	4mm/32 gauge 6mm/31 gauge	4mm/5mm/6mm/8mm- 31 gauge	4mm/32 gauge	5mm/6mm 4mm/32 gauge

- All needles have universal fit on all leading insulin pen delivery devices.
- Needles conform to latest pen needle standards-ISO 11608-2:2012.
- The [Forum for Injection Technique](#) UK considers the 4mm needle to be the safest pen needle length for adults and children regardless of age, gender and Body Mass Index.
- For patients where it is important that an injection is as painless as possible such as children, or those with learning difficulties, consider using a higher gauged (smaller diameter) needle.
- Regularly review patients' injection technique to avoid problems such as bruising, bleeding and pain. (See [Forum for Injection Technique](#) UK guidance on correct technique)
- Using shorter length needles helps to prevent intramuscular (IM) injection of insulin. (IM injection of insulin should be avoided as it can result in unpredictable blood glucose levels). Therefore, the most cost effective 4mm needles should be used.
- For patients currently using longer pen needle lengths (8mm,12mm), it is advisable to change to a shorter needle length (≤6mm) but only after discussion with a healthcare professional, to ensure patients receive advice on the correct injection technique.
- If the same injection site is used repeatedly, lipohypertrophy may develop (lumpy, firm and enlarged tissue). Insulin will not be absorbed correctly if injected into these areas. Patients should be taught an easy-to-follow rotation scheme from the onset of injection therapy. Patients are at risk of cutaneous amyloidosis if they do not rotate their injection sites. ([See Surrey PAD for MHRA alert cutaneous amyloidosis](#))
- Syringe or pen needles should only be used once. Reusing insulin needles is not optimal injection practice and patients should be discouraged from doing so.
- When prescribing pen needles, patients should be advised on safe disposal arrangements (see guidance on [PAD](#))
- New patients should not be initiated on safety needles unless the needles are used by non-paid carers or relatives. [NHSE guidance](#) states, "that for patients that are not able to self-administer it may be appropriate that the health care professional uses a safety needle; however, this would not need to be prescribed on prescription".** For patients **currently** prescribed safety needles, review the need for the prescription. If appropriate, then prescribe **any safety needles <£13/100**. [Guidelines: Safety Needles \(res-systems.net\)](#)