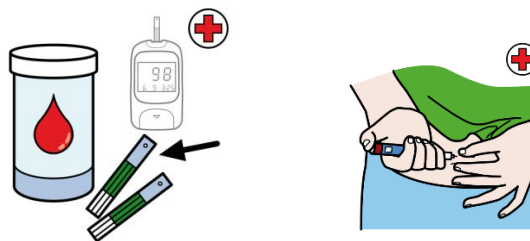


Medication Safety and Diabetes

Many people with developmental disabilities take one or more prescribed medications. If an individual has diabetes, one medication that they might need to take is insulin. Here are some important questions that direct support professionals (DSPs) can ask when supporting individuals in taking their medications.

Taking medications like insulin, and sticking to a prescribed diet, may help individuals with diabetes keep their blood sugar within normal levels. When helping someone take their medications, it is important for DSPs to follow the 7 Rights:

- **Right individual**
- **Right drug**
- **Right dose**
- **Right time**
- **Right route**
- **Right reason**
- **Right documentation**



For example, if people take too much or too little insulin, they may get very sick. No matter what type of medicine is prescribed, check with the doctor or pharmacist if you don't understand the answers to these questions to assist the individual you support:

- **What is the medication supposed to do?** What condition is it used to treat?
- **How long will it be before I know it is working?** Will it take minutes, hours, or weeks?
- **Will a blood test be needed to monitor the medicine?** The effect of some medications must be checked regularly using a blood test.
- **What should I do if the person misses a dose?** The answer will depend on the type of drug and the number of different drugs that the person takes.
- **Should the medication be taken with food or drinks?** If not, how long before or after a meal should the medicine be taken?
- **Are there any foods, drinks, supplements, or activities that should be avoided?**
- **Are there any medications that should not be taken together?**
- **What are common side effects?**
- **If I see side effects, what should I do?** Make sure you know whether to go to the emergency room, call the doctor, or make an appointment to see a doctor.
- **If the drug needs to be taken over a long period of time, what are the long-term effects?**

Tip Sheet

Always call a doctor or nurse if someone that you support has taken a medication that is not approved for him/her, if the person has not taken medication that is prescribed for him/her, or if the person has not taken it at the correct time or in the right amount.