

Storage of Insulin

Insulin can lose effectiveness when exposed to heat, bright light and very cold temperatures, this can cause the insulin to not work as you expect.

Often heat affected insulin will not look any different. It is important people with diabetes monitor their blood glucose levels regularly to check that they are managing their blood glucose levels within target range. Missing your target range could be a result of your insulin not being stored correctly. It could also be a result of other reasons, for example illness.

The recommended storage temperature is 2° - 8°C.

Once opened insulin can be used for 28 days when stored at these temperatures:	
Stable at 30° C or below:	Stable at 25° C or below:
Novo Nordisk insulin <i>NovoRapid, NovoMix 30, Levemir</i>	Novo Nordisk insulin <i>Actrapid, Protaphane, Mixtard 30/70</i>
Lilly insulin <i>Humalog, Humalog Mix25, Humulin R, Humulin NPH</i>	Aventis insulin <i>Lantus</i>

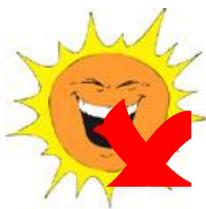
The Bureau of Meteorology records show that on average the days above 35°C in the major centres are:

Location	Days above 35°C
Darwin	42
Alice Springs	91
Yulara	108
Borroloola	130
Katherine	160



This means if you are living in hot conditions, your insulin should be stored in a fridge or a cool place; this includes the insulin you are using.

Many places in Australia experience overnight temperatures of less than 2°C. *During the winter months, Alice Springs has an average of 31 days below this temperature and Yulara 20 days.*



Hints:

- Do not leave your insulin in the car
- When you suspect that your insulin has been temperature affected, throw it out and replace it with new insulin.
- Do not use the insulin past the expiry date. **The insulin you are using should be thrown out after 28 days.**
- **Insulin should be stored on its side**
- When in hot or very cold temperatures, protect your insulin with cool packs and insulated containers such as cooler bags or Fridge-to-Go and Frio Insulin bags (available from Healthy Living NT)
- When storing insulin in a car fridge or in ice, ensure that it is protected in an insulated bag

Contact a diabetes educator or your pharmacist if you require further information relating to storage of insulin.