

GLP-1RAs

Non-insulin injectable medications

What are non-insulin injectable medications?

These are medications that are given by injection, but they are not insulin. They mimic the effect of a different hormone called an **incretin**. Incretins are gut hormones which are released whenever we eat carbohydrate or sugary foods.

One of these is called glucagon-like peptide 1 (GLP-1); hence the name of the class is GLP-1 receptor agonists (RA), or GLP-1RAs.

What do they do?

In people with type 2 diabetes, the effect of incretins is often reduced. Taking a GLP-1RA will:

- increase the amount of insulin released after a meal
- slow the emptying of the stomach (leaving you feeling full for longer)
- reduce the amount of glucose produced by the liver.

This leads to improved blood glucose levels and some weight loss.

Who can use GLP-1RA?

Adults with type 2 diabetes who are taking metformin or a sulphonylurea. It should not be used in people with chronic kidney disease or a history of pancreatitis.

For people commencing Byetta®, complete this NDSS form: [syringe or pen needle access form](#) (to access needles).

GLP-1RAs currently available in Australia

Trulicity®

Dosage: Once weekly

Drug name: Dulaglutide

Note: If you forget your dose on the day, take it the next day.

How to inject video: trulicity.com/how-to-use#how-to-use-trulicity-pen



Ozempic®

Dosage: Once weekly

Drug name: Semaglutide

Note: Starting dose 0.25mg for 4 weeks. Maintenance 0.5mg (for 4 weeks) up to 1mg per week if needed.

How to inject video: <https://www.ozempic.com/how-to-use/the-ozempic-pen.html#ifu-video>



Byetta®

Dosage: Twice daily (30-60 minutes before breakfast and evening meal)

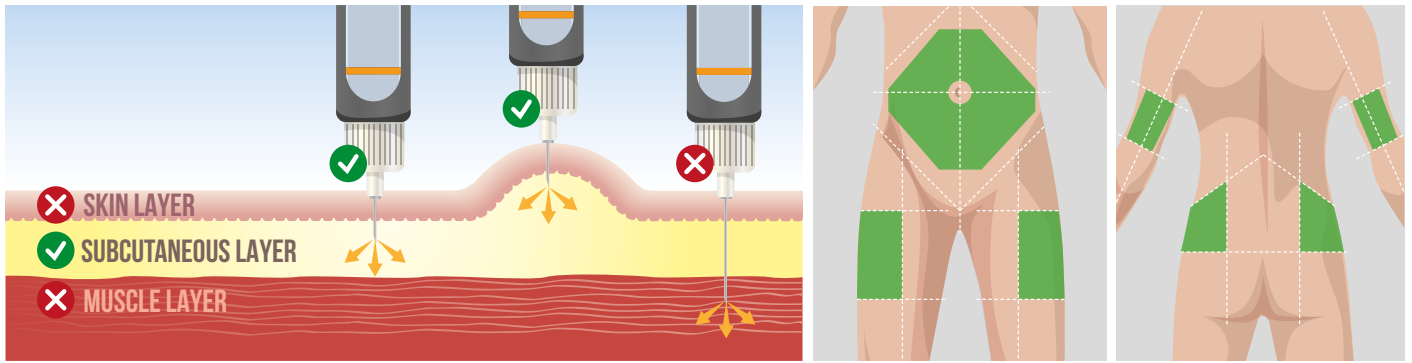
Drug name: Exenatide

Note: Starting dose 5mcg. Maintenance 10mcg.

How to inject video: youtube.com/watch?v=7g7fxMnUrOw



Note: Daily Liraglutide (Victoza® or Saxenda®) is available in Australia but not PBS listed for use in type 2 diabetes.



How to inject a GLP-1RA

The aim is to inject the medication into the fat layer just under the skin. Avoid scars, stretch marks and muscle.

Each device is pre-filled. Ensure you have the right dose.

- Trulicity® comes with its own needle. Byetta® and Ozempic® use 4mm insulin pen needles.
- Use a new needle each injection.
- Dispose of needles in a sharps container.
- Ask a diabetes educator, pharmacist or practice nurse to show you how to do your first injection.

Side effects of GLP-1RAs

- nausea
- headache, dizziness and feeling jittery
- weight loss
- vomiting
- diarrhoea
- constipation

Tell your GP or NP immediately if you experience the following:

- persistent abdominal pain
- vomiting, diarrhoea, heartburn, stomach pains which do not improve
- loss of appetite
- any skin reactions where you have injected.

Further resources

NDSS (National Diabetes Services Scheme)

Contact the NDSS on **1800 637 700** to order printed copies, or visit ndss.com.au/about-diabetes/resources

- [Non-insulin injectable](#)
- [Medications for type 2 diabetes](#)

Australian Diabetes Society

[Australian Diabetes Society Treatment Algorithm for Type 2 Diabetes](#)

Next steps

- Nutrition and eating well
- Monitoring blood glucose levels
- Hyperglycaemia & sick day management

Need help?
Phone 6215 9000
or visit diabetestas.org.au