

Pharmacy Pearls

Long-Acting Insulin Update

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AHP Contact: AHPPharmacist@URMC.Rochester.edu

Insulin affordability continues to be an issue in our community as, despite the introduction of generic options into the market, costs remain unreasonably high for many patients. Additionally, coverage of insulin products varies greatly between insurance plans and can change quite frequently resulting in confusion for providers and patients alike.

Available Long-Acting Insulins

| | NPH (Humulin®, Novolin® N) | Detemir U-100 (Levemir®) | Glargine U-100 (Basaglar®) | Glargine U-100 (Lantus®) | Glargine U-100 (Semglee™) | Glargine U-300 (Toujeo®) | Glargine U-300 (Toujeo® Max) | Degludec U-100 (Tresiba®) | Degludec U-200 (Tresiba®) |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Duration (hrs) | 14-24 | 8-24 | ~24 | 11-24 | 24 | 24 | 24 | 42 | 42 |
| Dosing | Qday-BID | Qday-BID | Once daily | Once daily | Once daily | Once daily | Once daily | Once daily | Once daily |
| Avg monthly cash price- vials* | \$25/vial (Walmart) | \$408/vial | --- | \$318/vial | \$124/vial | --- | --- | \$412/vial | \$409/vial |
| Avg monthly cash price- pens* | \$43/box (Walmart) | \$560/box | \$399/box | \$504/box | \$183/box | \$464/box | \$621/box | \$611/box | \$742/box |

*Estimated cash price for 30-day Rx from www.goodrx.com. Cost varies based on pharmacy, dose, day supply, and insurance coverage.

Despite analog insulins more closely mimicking physiologic insulin secretion, this does not translate into clinically significant differences in glycemic efficacy. NPH may cause slightly more nocturnal hypoglycemia than basal analogs in some patients, but this can be overcome with a bedtime snack.

Additionally, NPH does not cause more hypoglycemia-related ED visits or hospitalizations than analog insulins.

Switching To:

| | NPH | Basaglar® | Lantus® | Levemir® | Toujeo® | Tresiba® |
|-----------|--------------------------------------|---|---|--|--|----------------------------------|
| NPH | --- | ↓TDD by 20% Dose once daily | ↓TDD by 20% Dose once daily | ↓TDD by 20% Dose once daily | ↓TDD by 20% Dose once daily | ↓TDD by 20% Dose once daily |
| Basaglar® | Unit-per-unit Dose BID | --- | Unit-per-unit Dose once daily | Unit-per-unit Dose once-twice daily | Unit-per-unit Dose once daily (if Basaglar is dosed BID, consider 10% dose ↓) | Unit-per-unit Dose once daily |
| Lantus® | Unit-per-unit Dose BID | Unit-per-unit Dose once daily | --- | Unit-per-unit Dose once-twice daily | Unit-per-unit Dose once daily (If Lantus is dosed BID, consider 10% dose ↓) | Unit-per-unit Dose once daily |
| Levemir® | Unit-per-unit Dose BID | Consider 20% dose ↓ Dose once daily | Consider 20% dose ↓ Dose once daily | --- | Unit-per-unit Dose once daily (If Levemir is dosed BID, consider 20% dose ↓) | Unit-per-unit Dose once daily |
| Toujeo® | Consider 20% % dose ↓ Dose BID | ↓TDD by 20% Dose once daily | ↓TDD by 20% Dose once daily | Consider 20% dose ↓ Dose once-twice daily | --- | Unit-per-unit Dose once daily |
| Tresiba® | Unit-per-unit Dose BID | Unit-per-unit Dose once daily | Unit-per-unit Dose once daily | Unit-per-unit Dose once-twice daily | Unit-per-unit Dose once daily | --- |

Note: conversions are estimates based on package inserts and expert opinion; dose adjustments may be necessary based on BG readings