
NovoRapid® Penfill® 3mL

Insulin aspart (rys)

Consumer Medicine Information

What is in this leaflet

This leaflet answers some common questions about NovoRapid® Penfill® 3mL. It does not contain all the available information. It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

All medicines have risks and benefits. Your doctor has weighed the risks of you using NovoRapid against the benefits they expect it will have for you.

If you have any concerns about using this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Keep this leaflet with the medicine. You may need to read it again.

What NovoRapid® is used for

The insulin aspart, or “NovoRapid”, in NovoRapid Penfill is a fast-acting insulin used to treat diabetes mellitus. Diabetes mellitus is a condition where your pancreas does not produce enough insulin to control your blood sugar (glucose) level. Extra insulin is therefore needed.

NovoRapid lowers your blood sugar level after injection. When injected under your skin, NovoRapid has a faster onset of action than soluble human insulin. It takes effect within 10 to 20 minutes. As with all insulins, the duration of action will vary according to the dose, injection site, blood flow, temperature and level of physical activity. Usually, the maximum effect will occur between 1-3 hours after injection and the effect may last for up to 5 hours.

Penfill 3mL is a glass cartridge designed to be used with Novo Nordisk insulin delivery systems (such as NovoPen® 3).

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions about why NovoRapid Penfill has been prescribed for you.

Before you use NovoRapid® Penfill®

When you must not use it

Do not use NovoRapid Penfill if:

- you have very low blood sugar levels (hypogly-caemia). See section “If you use too much (overdose)”
- you are allergic to insulin aspart or any of the ingredients listed in the “Ingredients” section of this leaflet
- it is after the expiry date (“Expiry”) printed on the label and carton
- the packaging is torn, shows signs of tampering or does not look quite right
- you think it has been frozen or exposed to excessive heat
- the NovoRapid in your NovoRapid Penfill looks cloudy, has bits in it or is not clear

Before you start to use it

Tell your doctor if you:

- are pregnant or planning to become pregnant
- are breast-feeding or planning to breast-feed

- plan to have surgery
- think you may have allergies to insulin aspart or any of the ingredients listed in the “Ingredients” section of this leaflet

Tell your doctor if you have or have had any medical conditions, especially the following:

- kidney problems
- liver problems
- gastrointestinal problems

If you have not told your doctor about any of the above, tell them before you use NovoRapid Penfill.

Taking other medicines

Your dose of insulin may need to change if you take other medicines. **Tell your doctor if you are currently taking any medicines, especially the following:**

- oral hypoglycaemic agents - used for the treatment of non-insulin dependent diabetes (type 2 diabetes)
- monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOI) - used for the treatment of depression
- alpha-blocking agents - used for the treatment of high blood pressure and to relieve difficulty in passing urine caused by an enlarged prostate
- non-selective beta-blocking agents - used for the treatment of certain heart conditions and high blood pressure
- angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors - used for the treatment of certain heart conditions, high blood pressure or elevated protein/albumin in the urine
- salicylates, e.g., aspirin - used to relieve pain and lower fever
- anabolic steroids – used to promote growth
- glucocorticoids (except when applied locally) – used to treat inflammatory conditions
- oral contraceptives (“the pill”) - used for birth control
- thiazides, frusemide or ethacrynic acid - used for the treatment of high blood pressure or fluid retention (oedema)
- thyroid hormones - used for the treatment of malfunction of the thyroid gland
- sympathomimetics - used for the treatment of asthma
- sulphonamides – used to treat bacterial infections

Or other specific medicines including:

- danazol - used to treat certain female conditions
- oxymetholone – used to treat certain blood disorders
- octreotide - used to treat gastrointestinal endocrine tumours
- diazoxide - used for the treatment of high blood pressure
- nicotinic acid - used for the treatment of high cholesterol levels in the blood
- asparaginase - used to treat leukaemia and lymph gland tumours
- quinine – used for the prevention of malaria and the relief of muscle cramps
- quinidine – used for the control of heart problems
- growth hormone – used to treat persons with growth hormone deficiency

Tell your doctor if you are taking any other medicines, including any that you buy without a prescription from your pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.

Immediately before you use it

Make sure that:

- the NovoRapid in your NovoRapid Penfill is clear and colourless
- your Penfill is not damaged
- the width you can see of the rubber stopper (plunger) is less than the width of the white bar code band

Do not use NovoRapid Penfill if any of these happen.

NovoRapid Penfill is for your use only to avoid the risk of passing on diseases.

Using NovoRapid[®] Penfill[®]

How to use NovoRapid Penfill

Carefully follow the advice from your doctor and your diabetes team regarding type of insulin, dosage and time of administration, blood sugar monitoring, diet and exercise in order to achieve good control of your diabetes.

Your doctor may also want you to use another insulin such as Protaphane[®], Monotard[®] or Ultratard[®].

Changing to NovoRapid

If you switch from another insulin to NovoRapid your dosage may have to be changed by your doctor. **Do not change your insulin unless your doctor tells you to.**

When to use it

NovoRapid should normally be used immediately (up to 10 minutes) before your meal or carbohydrate snack. When necessary NovoRapid may be used immediately after the meal.

How much to use

Your doctor will tell you how much NovoRapid to inject at each meal time.

How to use it

- NovoRapid Penfill is designed to be used with Novo Nordisk insulin delivery systems and NovoFine[®] needles.
- Make sure you are using the correct type and strength of insulin. Carefully follow the instructions on how to use your Novo Nordisk insulin delivery system.
- Do not use the insulin level indicator on the insulin delivery system to measure your dose of NovoRapid.
- You should inject NovoRapid under the skin (subcutaneous injection) as shown to you by your doctor or diabetes educator.
- NovoRapid can be injected into your abdomen, your thigh or your upper arm.
- Remember to change your injection site regularly as shown to you by your doctor or diabetes educator.
- If you use NovoRapid Penfill and another type of insulin, you must use a separate insulin delivery system for each type of Penfill.
- Do not use NovoRapid in insulin pumps.
- Take care not to drop or knock the insulin delivery system that contains NovoRapid Penfill.

How to inject

- Prime the Novo Nordisk insulin delivery system before each injection until a drop of NovoRapid appears at the tip of the needle, as described in the insulin delivery system user manual.

- Pinch your skin between two fingers, push the needle into the skin fold and inject the insulin under the skin.
- After the injection leave the needle under the skin for at least 6 seconds. Keep the push button fully pushed in until you remove the needle from the skin. This will ensure that the full dose has been delivered and will also mean that there is less risk of blood or other body fluids flowing back into the needle or Penfill cartridge.
- If blood appears after the needle has been withdrawn, press the injection site lightly with a finger.

After you use it

- When you are using NovoRapid Penfill you should remove and dispose of the needle after each injection. If you do not remove it, temperature changes may cause liquid to leak out of the needle and the insulin concentration may change.
- Health care professionals, relatives and other carers should follow general precautionary measures for removal and disposal of needles, to eliminate the risk of needle stick injury.

Do not refill NovoRapid Penfill.

How long to use it

Do not stop using NovoRapid Penfill unless your doctor tells you to.

If you use too much (overdose)

Your blood sugar may become too low (hypoglycaemia). This can also happen if you miss a meal or exercise more than usual.

The first **symptoms of hypoglycaemia** can come on suddenly. They may include: cold sweat, cool pale skin, fatigue, nervousness or tremor, drowsiness, anxious feeling, unusual tiredness and weakness, confusion, difficulty in concentration, excessive hunger, vision changes, headache, nausea and rapid heart beat.

What to do in case of hypoglycaemia

If you experience any of the symptoms mentioned above you should immediately take sugary food or drink e.g. lollies, biscuits or fruit juice. **Always carry one of these with you.**

Tell your relatives, friends and close workmates that you have diabetes and how they can help you if you get a severe hypoglycaemic reaction. Make sure they know you should not be given anything to eat or drink if you are unconscious because you could choke.

If you are unconscious, you should be turned on your side and your relatives, friends or workmates should get medical help immediately.

An injection of the hormone glucagon may speed up recovery from unconsciousness. This can be given by a relative or friend who has been instructed in its use. If glucagon is used, sugary food or drink should be given by mouth as soon as you are conscious again. If you do not feel better after this, you should contact your doctor, diabetes educator or the closest hospital. If you do not respond to glucagon treatment, you will have to be treated in a hospital.

See your doctor if you have had repeated hypoglycaemic reactions or one reaction which led to unconsciousness, as your insulin dose may need to be changed.

If severe hypoglycaemia is not treated, it can cause brain damage and death.

If you forget to use it

If you realise you have missed a dose you should check your blood sugar level. If you repeatedly use less insulin than you need, your blood sugar may become unusually high (hyperglycaemia). This can also happen if you are sick or if you eat much more than usual.

The **symptoms of unusually high blood sugar levels** will appear gradually. They include: increased urination, thirst, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, drowsiness (fatigue), flushed dry skin, dry mouth and acetone breath.

What to do in case of hyperglycaemia

If you recognise any of the symptoms mentioned above, you should test your blood sugar level and your urine for ketones as soon as possible. These symptoms may indicate that you have a condition called ketoacidosis.

Contact your doctor immediately as this condition is critical and if untreated may result in coma and death.

While you are using NovoRapid[®] Penfill[®]

Things you must do

Make sure that you tell every doctor or health care professional who is treating you that you have diabetes and are using insulin. If your child has diabetes it is important to tell their carers.

Measure your blood sugar level regularly.

When driving or operating machines

For people with diabetes driving and operating heavy machinery is generally safe. However your ability to concentrate or react may be reduced if you have hypoglycaemia. Please keep this in mind in all situations where you might put yourself and others at risk (e.g. driving a car or operating machinery).

Make sure that you have sugary food or drink easily available in the car or workplace. If practical, check your blood sugar level before driving or operating heavy machinery.

You should contact your doctor if you have:

- frequent episodes of hypoglycaemia
- reduced or absent warning signs of hypoglycaemia

When you are sick

Illness (especially with fever, infection, nausea or vomiting) may cause your insulin needs to change. Even if you are not eating you still require insulin. **See your doctor or diabetes educator to develop an insulin plan for those times when you are sick.**

If you have developed problems with your kidneys or your liver your doctor may lower your insulin dosage.

When you are pregnant or breast-feeding

If you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant you should consult your doctor immediately to discuss the control of your diabetes. This is because your insulin requirements may change during pregnancy.

Breast-feeding during insulin treatment should not harm your baby. Your insulin dosage and diet may need to change. You should, therefore, consult your doctor to discuss any changes.

Things you must not do

Do not give NovoRapid Penfill to anyone else, even if they have the same condition as you.

Do not use NovoRapid Penfill to treat any other complaints.

Do not stop using NovoRapid Penfill without checking with your doctor.

Things to be careful of

When you are drinking alcohol

Be careful when you drink alcohol. Alcohol (including beer and wine) may lead to low blood sugar (hypoglycaemia). The early warning symptoms of hypoglycaemia may not be noticed and go untreated if you have had too much alcohol. **Never drink alcohol on an empty stomach.**

When you are travelling

The time differences within and between countries may mean that you have to inject your insulin and eat your meals at different times than usual. **Make sure you consult your doctor or diabetes team if you are planning to travel.**

Things that may help your condition

People with diabetes should lead a healthy lifestyle. Your doctor and diabetes team can give you information on healthy living for people with diabetes.

Diet

Insulin is essential to keep the blood sugar within acceptable limits. Regular meals and a balanced diet are important factors in the management of diabetes. It is important that you discuss a suitable diet plan with your doctor or diabetes team.

Smoking

Smoking may increase the chance of complications with your diabetes.

Side effects

All medicines can have side effects. Sometimes they are serious, most of the time they are not. You may need medical treatment if you get some of the side effects.

Hypoglycaemia

NovoRapid may cause **hypoglycaemia** - see section "If you use too much (overdose)".

Allergy

Some people may notice redness, swelling and itching at the site of injection (**local allergy**). Usually these symptoms disappear within a few weeks during continued use.

If the symptoms do not disappear, spread to other parts of your body or if you suddenly feel sick (i.e. sweating, vomiting, breathing difficulties, rapid heart beat, feeling dizzy) you should contact your doctor immediately. You may have a **general allergic reaction** which is rare but could be serious.

Other

When you first start your insulin treatment you may get visual problems or swollen hands and feet.

If you inject too often in the same site, this may result in skin changes (called lipodystrophy). To avoid this, you should change your injection site regularly as shown to you by your doctor or diabetes educator.

Tell your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible if you notice any side effects or do not feel well while you are using NovoRapid.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist to answer any questions you have.

Storage

NovoRapid Penfill **that are not being used** should be stored between 2°C and 8°C in a refrigerator (not too near the freezer section).

The NovoRapid Penfill **that you are using** in your insulin delivery system, or that you are carrying as a spare, does not need to be kept in a refrigerator. You can use it for up to 4 weeks after taking it out of the refrigerator. **Discard NovoRapid Penfill after 4 weeks even if there is still some NovoRapid left in it.**

The NovoRapid in NovoRapid Penfill must not be frozen, or exposed to heat or direct sunlight. **Protect the NovoRapid in NovoRapid Penfill from light by keeping the cartridges in the carton when not in use.**

Never use NovoRapid Penfill after the expiry date printed on the label and carton.

Never use NovoRapid Penfill if the solution is not clear and colourless.

Keep out of the reach of children.

Product Description

What it looks like

NovoRapid is a clear, colourless solution for subcutaneous injection. NovoRapid Penfill 3mL is a glass cartridge designed to be used with Novo Nordisk insulin delivery systems.

Ingredients

NovoRapid contains insulin aspart (rys) 100 units per mL (100 U/mL) as the active ingredient. The abbreviation "rys" indicates the method of genetic engineering used to manufacture the insulin aspart.

NovoRapid also contains the following inactive ingredients: glycerol, phenol, meta-cresol, zinc chloride, sodium chloride, dibasic sodium phosphate dihydrate, sodium hydroxide, hydrochloric acid and water for injections.

Manufacturer

NovoRapid Penfill 3mL is made in Denmark and supplied in New Zealand by:

Novo Nordisk Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

Auckland

This leaflet was prepared on 29 December 2002.

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