



18 June 2025

Medicine Supply Alert Notice

Insulatard® (isophane insulin, human) Penfill® 100units/ml suspension for injection 3ml cartridges

Priority: Level 2*

Valid until: noted product is being discontinued

Issue

1. Insulatard® (isophane insulin, human) Penfill® 100units/ml suspension for injection 3ml cartridges are being discontinued; stock is anticipated to be exhausted by June 2025.
2. Humulin® I KwikPen® (isophane insulin, human) 100units/ml suspension for injection 3ml pre-filled pens are available and can support a full increase in demand.
3. Humulin® I (isophane insulin, human) 100units/ml suspension for injection 3ml cartridges are available but cannot support an increase in demand.
4. **TO NOTE:** This is the second of three MSANs covering discontinuations of Novo Nordisk insulin products (NovoRapid® FlexTouch®, Insulatard® Penfill® and all Levemir® presentations). A third MSAN will provide clinical advice on the discontinuation of all Levemir® presentations. Clinicians should not initiate new patients on Levemir® or make any switches from Levemir® to alternative insulins at this time. It should be noted that where alternative insulin products have been recommended, consideration has been made both to these product discontinuations, and availability of other insulin products.

Advice and Actions

5. Clinicians should:
 - not initiate new patients on Insulatard® Penfill® 100units/ml suspension for injection in cartridge;
 - pro-actively review all patients currently prescribed Insulatard® Penfill® 100units/ml suspension for injection in cartridges; and
 - consider switching patients to Humulin® I KwikPen® 100units/ml suspension for injection prefilled pen from April 2025; and
 - for patients who cannot use Humulin® I KwikPen® and have no carers to support them with administration, refer to local prescribing guidelines/formularies for selection of an alternative insulin; and
 - if the above options are not considered suitable; seek advice from specialist diabetes teams on management options.

*<https://www.nss.nhs.scot/media/1842/medicine-supply-alert-notices-definitions-of-classifications-21-october-2019.pdf>

6. Prescribers and pharmacy teams should ensure that all patients are informed of reason for the switch, counselled on the change in treatment, provided with training on use of new pen/insulin preparation, including signposting to training videos, and advised that closer monitoring of blood glucose levels are required initially, and dose may need to be adjusted if required (see Additional information section).

Additional Information

Isophane insulin, human

7. Onset of action is within 1½ hours, reaches a maximum effect within 4–8 hours and the entire duration of action is approximately 16 hours but ranges between 14-24 hours. It is usually administered twice daily but can be used once daily in individual circumstances.

Insulatard® Penfill®

8. The 3ml cartridges are compatible with NovoPen® 6 or NovoPen Echo® Plus:
 - NovoPen® 6 dials up doses from 1 to 60 units in 1-unit increments.
 - NovoPen Echo® Plus dials up doses from 0.5 to 30 units in 0.5-unit increments.

Humulin® I KwikPen®

9. A pre-filled disposable pen injector containing a 3ml cartridge that dials up 1 unit at a time and can deliver from 1 to 60 units in a single injection.

Switching between insulin pens

10. When switching to another pen, ensure patients are provided with appropriate education and training to ensure they can use the new device and administer the correct dose. As a precaution, the patient should be advised to initially monitor their glucose levels more closely. In the event of concerns with new glucose excursions (high or low glucose readings), the patient should be advised to speak to/seek advice from their specialist diabetes team.

Links to further information

- [BNF- Insulin](#)
- [BNF- Isophane insulin](#)
- [BNF- Insulin preparations](#)
- [NICE guidance: Type 1 diabetes in adults \(insulin therapy\)](#)
- [NICE CKS- Insulin therapy in type 1 diabetes](#)
- [NICE CKS- Insulin therapy in type 2 diabetes](#)
- [SmPC- Insulatard® Penfill® 100units/ml suspension for injection in 3ml cartridges](#)
- [SmPC- Humulin® I KwikPen® 100units/ml suspension for injection in pre-filled pens](#)
- [User manual- Humulin® I KwikPen® 100units/ml suspension for injection in pre-filled pens](#)

Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS) website

11. The UK Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) in conjunction with the Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS) have launched an online Medicines Supply Tool, which provides up to date information about medicine supply issues. To access the online Medicines Supply Tool you need to register with the [SPS website](#). Registration for access to the website is available to UK healthcare professionals and organisations providing NHS healthcare. The tool is located under the Tools tab and then click on the Medicines Supply option.
12. We encourage prescribers, pharmacy professionals, and pharmacy procurement leads in Scotland to register with the SPS website and use its Medicine Supply Tool to stay up to date concerning medicines supply disruptions. Please be aware that while medicines supply issues will appear on the SPS website, some of the recommended actions may not always be appropriate / relevant within the Scottish context.

Enquiries

13. Enquiries from Health Boards or healthcare professionals should be directed in the first instance to PharmacyTeam@gov.scot (primary care) or NSS.NHSSMedicineShortages@nhs.scot (secondary care).