Read this important information before taking:

Apidra (insulin glulisine)

[ Extra care is needed because Apidra is a high-alert medicine. ]

High-alert medicines have been proven to be safe and effective. But these medicines can cause serious injury if a mistake happens while taking them. This means that it is very important for you to know about this medicine and take it exactly as directed.

When taking your medicine

1. **Know your insulin.** Apidra is a rapid-acting insulin that should be injected below the skin within 15 minutes before or within 20 minutes after starting a meal. Have food ready before injection. After injecting the insulin, do not delay eating or skip a meal.

2. **Prepare your insulin.** Apidra can be mixed with NPH insulin (intermediate-acting insulin), but always draw Apidra into the syringe first and use immediately after preparing the mixture. Do not mix Apidra with other insulins if using an insulin pen or external pump. Do not vigorously shake insulin before use.

3. **Don’t reuse or recycle.** Dispose of used syringes/needles, pens, and lancets in a sealable hard plastic or metal container (e.g., empty detergent bottle or sharps container from your pharmacy). When the container is full, seal the lid and discard the container according to your community guidelines (www.safeneedledisposal.org). Do not reuse or recycle syringes/needles or lancets.

4. **Don’t share.** Even if you change the needle, sharing an insulin pen or syringe may spread diseases carried in the blood, including hepatitis and HIV.

To avoid serious side effects

5. **Avoid mix-ups.** If you use more than one type of insulin, make sure each vial or pen looks different to avoid mix-ups. For example, Apidra and Lantus (a long-acting insulin) are both clear medicines in elongated vials or pens that can look similar. To make them look different, put a rubber band around one type of insulin.

6. **Check your medicine.** Handwritten prescriptions for insulin glulisine (Apidra) can be misread as insulin glargine (Lantus, another type of insulin). When you pick up your insulin at the pharmacy, be sure it’s the right type of insulin.

7. **Treat low blood sugar (hypoglycemia).** Always carry a quick source of sugar, such as glucose tablets, candy, or juice, to treat low blood sugar. Signs of low blood sugar are listed on the other side of the page.

8. **Test your blood sugar.** Ask your doctor how often you should test your blood sugar. Keep a log of your blood sugar levels and how much insulin you take each day. Bring the log each time you visit your doctor.

9. **Get a periodic lab test.** You should have a hemoglobin A1c test at least twice a year to determine how well your diabetes is being controlled. The test shows an average of your blood sugar control over a 6- to 12-week period. Your goal is a hemoglobin A1c of 7% or less.

When you should call your doctor

10. **Call for illness or changes in habits.** Your insulin needs may change because of illness, stress, changes in eating habits or physical activity, and other medicines you take. Call your doctor if you experience these conditions. Never change your insulin dose unless advised by your doctor.

Many types of insulin are available in pen form, which takes the hassle out of preparing doses. For more information on insulin pens, visit: http://insulinpens.com.
Hypoglycemia is caused by too much insulin or increased work or exercise without eating. Symptoms of hypoglycemia may be different for each person and can change from time to time. Hypoglycemia can affect your ability to think and react quickly, so driving a car could be risky. Severe hypoglycemia can lead to loss of consciousness, seizures, brain damage, or even death. Know the symptoms of hypoglycemia and treat it quickly by drinking juice or a sugar-containing beverage, or eating sugar or candy. Talk to your doctor if hypoglycemia is a problem for you.