Pathway to Insulin Pump Therapy

You have met the pre-pump requirements. This handout will describe the next steps for using insulin pump therapy to help you better manage your diabetes. This treatment option may improve your blood sugar control and decrease frequent low and high blood sugar levels. You and your diabetes team will work together so that you can achieve your blood sugar goals.

Your pathway to insulin pump therapy includes four phases:

- Pre-pump Checklist
- Understanding the Insulin Pump
- Maintenance
- Post-pump Care

Pre-pump Checklist
There are a few things to do before starting to use a pump. Here is a checklist to help you.

- Check your insurance coverage for cost and any pre-pump requirements.
- Learn about all of your pump options. Your health care team, insulin pump representatives, web sites, brochures, family or friends can be good resources.
- After you choose a pump, you will contact the pump company to start the ordering process. The order will be sent to the endocrinologist for approval. Once signed, the order will be faxed back to the pump company. The insurance approval process will then begin. This may take a few weeks.
- After the pump is approved, you will be notified. The pump will be shipped to your home.

Understanding the Insulin Pump
A certified insulin pump trainer will contact you to set up pump training. Before you meet with the trainer, review the materials that came with the pump.

- Put a battery in the pump or charge the pump or sensor.
- Get to know the different buttons and the menu.
- Set the date and time.

The trainer will notify the diabetes educator to work out training dates. The certified pump trainer will teach you how to use the pump using normal saline, not insulin. Normal saline will not affect blood sugar levels. When you meet with the diabetes educator, one to two weeks later, insulin will be started in your pump.

Once insulin is started in your pump, you will be asked to check your blood sugar levels when fasting, before meals, 2 hours after meals, bedtime and 2-3AM to help fine-tune the bolus pump settings. Basal rates will be tested during the first week and as needed after changes in basal rates. You will be given information about how to do this.

The week of the insulin start, you will upload your insulin pump daily. Changes will be made as needed based on your blood sugar goals. Call the diabetes team if you have high or low blood sugar levels.
Maintenance
You will have a clinic visit with a diabetes educator 2-4 weeks after insulin is started in the pump. You can expect a review of basic pump features and will have time to discuss topics. Common concerns will be addressed such as:

- How to prevent and treat high blood sugar levels
- How to prevent and treat low blood sugar levels
- Sick day guidelines
- Advanced features of the pump
- Traveling with a pump
- Pump failure
- Pump supplies renewal
- Infusion sets
- Infusion sites
- Taping issues

Post-pump Care
Plan to follow up with your diabetes team every 3 months. Visits will be designed to meet your needs. Between these visits, do the following:

- Work on using features of the pump to improve your blood sugar control.
- Ask about basal testing and do this as needed.
- Maintain your pre-pump requirements so that you can keep using pump therapy!

References