

Diabetes Pen Needles/Lancets

- NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB recommends prescribing diabetes pen needles costing **less than £3 per 100 needles** (see below) as listed in Part IXA (Appliances Hypodermic Equipment) in the NHS Drug Tariff¹. In 2019 NHS England recommended a cost threshold of £5 or less per 100 needles², however since then the cost of many pen needles have fallen, and currently there are several brands costing less than £3 per 100 needles.
- NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria recommends prescribing lancets costing **less than £3 per 100**
- Patients who choose to access private GP services to obtain GLP-1 analogues for weight management are not entitled to have pen needles or other ancillaries such as sharps bins prescribed on an NHS prescription. The private provider is responsible for providing all the ancillaries required as part of the service they offer at the patient's own expense.

Preferred Choices of standard Pen Needles and Lancets

The pen needles on the guidance are compatible will all leading insulin and GLP-1 pens.

Needle Name	Length /gauge ⁺	Price x 100 needles*	Product Information
GlucoRx® Carepoint	4mm/5mm/6mm - 31g	£2.75	Product Information
GlucoRx® Carepoint Ultra	4mm/32g	£2.75	Product Information
Greenfine®	4mm/32g 5mm/6mm/31g	£2.75	Product Information
Microdot® Max	4mm/32g 6mm/31g	£2.74	Product Information

⁺ FIT guidance recommends 4mm needles are suitable for the majority of people- see ref 3

Lancet Name	Available Lengths	Gauge	Price x 100 lancets*
GlucoRx Lancets (Pack 200)	0.31mm	30g	£2.25
AgaMatrix Comfort Twist	0.32mm	30g	£2.69
AgaMatrix Ultra Thin (Pack 200)	0.2mm/0.35mm	33/28g	£2.72
Fastclic Lancets (Pack 204)	0.3mm	30g	£2.89
4SURE	0.32mm	30g	£2.90
CareSens	0.31mm/0.36mm	30g/28g	£2.95
Microlet	0.5mm	28g	£2.99
Greenlan Lancets	0.35mm	28g	£3.00

**Prices Based on the February 2025 Drug Tariff – which may be subject to change. Other lancets may be available under £3 per 100. Check most recent Drug Tariff*

General Information and Good Injection Practice

- The Forum for Injection Technique (FIT) UK recommends that a 4mm pen needle inserted perpendicularly (ninety degrees to the skin), is long enough to penetrate the skin and enter the subcutaneous tissue, with little risk of intramuscular (or intradermal) injection. Therefore, it should be considered the safest pen needle for adults and children regardless of age, gender, and Body Mass Index (BMI)⁴.
- The 4mm pen needle may be used safely and effectively in all people living with obesity. Although it is the needle of choice for these people, a 5mm needle may be acceptable⁵.
- It is advised that patients currently using longer length pen needles are reviewed; advised on the correct injection technique and changed to a needle of shorter length. For patients prescribed longer length needles, ensure the rationale is documented in their medical record and continue to review periodically.
- Leakage of the injectable diabetes medication can occur rarely with shorter needles which is usually due to poor injection technique, and this should prompt a review. If leakage occurs, then the person should count slowly down from 10 before withdrawing the needle.
- If doses of more than 60 units of 100 units/ml insulin are required, then the doses should be split and given at different sites.
- Ensure that the quantities on the prescription are appropriate, that the product is added to the repeat and in line with the frequency of dosing.
- Remember and remove any old products from repeat prescription if the diabetes product has been changed.
- Remind people to rotate their injection sites and use a new needle each time.
- Ensure people are educated on the safe disposal of needles using a sharps bin. Sharps bins and needle clipping devices can be prescribed on NHS prescription. Sharpsguard® yellow 1 Litre/ Sharpsafe® yellow 1 Litre are suitable for insulin and GLP-1 agonist needles and lancets.
- The mechanism for the disposal of full sharps bins varies depending on local arrangements as each local authority has different arrangements.

References

1. NHS Business Services Authority. Drug Tariff. 2025 [Tariff.book \(nhsbsa.nhs.uk\)](https://nhsbsa.nhs.uk) (accessed 07/2/25).
2. Items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs. NHS England and NHS Improvement. Version 2, June 2019. Available from NHSE [NHS England » Items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: policy guidance](#) (accessed 15/2/24)
3. FIT UK Forum for Injection Technique: The UK Injection and Infusion Technique Recommendations 5th Edition, Dec 2019 [accessed 14.8.24] available at: [FIT+UK+Guidelines+5th+Ed.pdf \(squarespace.com\)](#)