

Background Insulin in DAFNE

The DAFNE Executive Board has recently issued a statement clarifying current best practice regarding background insulin (BI) and DAFNE. The statement has resulted from an audit of the DAFNE Research Database which shows a statistically significant reduction in HbA_{1c} 12 months after DAFNE occurs **only in patients taking background insulin twice daily**.

Analysis of groups taking different types of background insulin (isophane or analogue) correcting for baseline HbA_{1c}, age and duration of diabetes showed **no difference in HbA_{1c} outcome between insulin types**, but consistently showed statistically significant reductions in HbA_{1c} only in patients taking twice daily background insulin.

In the original DAFNE research, isophane (NPH) insulin was exclusively used, and always in a twice daily regimen. There may be reasons why healthcare professionals consider analogue BI use, such as patient preference for once daily regimen, or problematic overnight hypoglycaemia, but in the absence of such indications the Executive Board continues to recommend twice daily NPH insulin as the default regimen for DAFNE.

What does this mean for existing DAFNE users?

This advice gives DAFNE participants the best chance of achieving a significant reduction in HbA_{1c} at 12 months after undertaking the course. However, the advice is also applicable to those who previously completed the DAFNE course as it is seen to be the basis for improved long term HbA_{1c} control.

The advice for existing DAFNE users is therefore as follows:

- If you are currently using **twice daily NPH** then there is no need to do anything.
- If you are currently using **twice daily analogue** insulin then there is no need to do anything.
- If you are currently using **once a day BI** and your HbA_{1c} is in range then there is no need to do anything.
- If you are currently using **once a day BI** and your HbA_{1c} is above target, then you could discuss the possibility of moving to twice daily BI (NPH or analogue) with your DAFNE healthcare professional at your convenience.

As always, please consult with your physician or DAFNE Educator before making a significant change to your insulin regimen.

Which BI insulin am I taking?

Type	Brand Names
NPH / isophane	Humulin I Hypurin Porcine Isophane Insulatard Insuman Basal
Analogue	Lantus (glargine) Levemir (detemir) Tresiba (degludec) - note that as this very long-acting insulin is new to the market there is not yet any experience of its use in DAFNE