

## Myths and Truths About Diabetes for Latino Patients

In fact, what you read here may help you live a longer and healthier life.<sup>1</sup> **Talk to your doctor about whether insulin is right for you.** Meanwhile, here are some myths and facts about insulin.



### **MYTH 1: Susto caused my diabetes.**

**FACT:** The relationship between *susto* (fright sickness) and diseases is still being explored.<sup>2</sup> However, experts agree that type 2 diabetes is caused by heredity, being overweight, poor diet, lack of exercise, and getting older. **That's why diet, exercise, and taking your prescribed pills or insulin are so important when treating diabetes.**

### **MYTH 2: Taking insulin means I've failed with pills or my diabetes is getting worse.**

**FACT:** You haven't failed. Your diabetes may change over time<sup>3</sup>, or your body may not be responding to pills. Many people who start on pills may need insulin later to control their blood sugar. **Your doctor can tell you what will work best for you.**

### **MYTH 3: Insulin is prescribed when other treatments don't work.**

**FACT:** There are different treatments to match the needs of individuals. If your body is not producing enough insulin, your doctor might prescribe it for you. **Only your doctor can tell if and when insulin is the right treatment for your body.**

### **MYTH 4: Injecting insulin is painful and will interfere with my schedule.**

**FACT:** The insulin needle is tiny and thin. New injection pens make it even easier.

### **MYTH 5: Insulin is dangerous/addictive.**

**FACT:** Insulin is **not** addictive or dangerous like narcotics. It replaces a chemical your body once made naturally. Plus, it's necessary for your survival.<sup>1</sup> **Take your insulin as your doctor instructs.**

**Remember, insulin is only a part of treating diabetes.** Following a meal plan, staying active, regularly checking your blood sugar levels, and taking all diabetes medications as prescribed are also important steps.

### **Important Safety Information for Insulin**

Possible side effects may include blood sugar levels that are too low, injection site reactions, and allergic reactions, including itching and rash. Tell your doctor about all other medicines and supplements you are taking because they can change the way insulin works. Glucose monitoring is recommended for all patients with diabetes.

Individual results may vary. This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Only your doctor can diagnose and treat a medical problem.

#### References:

1. American Diabetes Association. Type 2 diabetes. American Diabetes Association Web site. <http://www.diabetes.org/type-2-diabetes.jsp>. Accessed September 6, 2008.
2. Deines-Wallace CK, Bentshek D. Hispanic ideologies of diabetes: the role of *susto*. Poster presentation. [http://gpsa.unlv.edu/forms/Poster\\_Wallace.pdf](http://gpsa.unlv.edu/forms/Poster_Wallace.pdf). Accessed September 6, 2008.
3. American Diabetes Association. Standards of medical care in diabetes—2007. *Diabetes Care*. 2007;30(suppl1):S4-S41.