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USING SYMLIN FOR TYPE 2 DIABETES

Symlin is a hormone secreted with insulin by the pancreas. In patients with Type 1 diabetes and in Type 2 diabetes who do not make insulin any more, taking symlin along with insulin helps the insulin work better to prevent the blood sugars from increasing after eating carbohydrates.

Symlin delays the emptying of the stomach which prevents high blood sugars after meals. There is less insulin needed at the meals. Because of the delayed emptying, patients do not feel as hungry. Not feeling hungry helps to reduce food intake and weight.

The main side-effect of Symlin is nausea. The dose needs to be gradually increased over time to adapt the body to the medication.

Eventually, Symlin should be given at any meal that contains carbohydrates. To first start the medication, however, you should start a small dose at each meal and gradually increase the dose. You may also start the medication at one meal only and gradually increase it to the full dose at that meal prior to adding other meals.

Symlin is available in a pen and the dosage is by units. The maximum dose at meals is 60mcg for patients with Type 1 diabetes and 120 mcg for patients with Type 2 diabetes. You may or may not be able to take the full dose. Smaller doses are still helpful in lowering the blood sugar after eating.

TO START SYMLIN: My maximum dose at each meal is: 120mcg

Start with 15mcg of Symlin before eating. Every 3 days, you may increase the dose by 15mcg so that you are on 120mcg by the end of 15 days. If you get nauseated after raising your dose, you should lower the dose back to the previous dose that did not cause nausea.

Days 1-3: 15mcg of Symlin at each meal.

Days 4-6: 30mcg of Symlin at each meal.

(Increase the dose only if you have not had any nausea with the preceding dose)

Days 7-9: 45 mcg of Symlin at each meal. (Increase the dose only if you have not had any nausea with the preceding dose)

Days 10-12: 60 mcg of Symlin at each meal. (Increase the dose only if you have not had any nausea with the preceding dose)

Days 13-15: 120mcg of Symlin at each meal. (Increase the dose only if you have not had any nausea with the preceding dose)

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The reasoning behind the slow progression is to try to prevent nausea. Do not abandon the medication because of nausea, just reduce the dose and stay on the lower dose.

INJECTING SYMLIN

You may mix Symlin with rapid acting insulin such as Novolog, Humalog or Apidra. (The manufacturer does not recommend this but studies of the mixture show that it works) If you mix Symlin with insulin, you must immediately give the injection. You may also give the insulin and the Symlin as separate injections. Symlin may either be refrigerated or left at room temperature. If left out, the current vial is only good for 28 days.

You should inject the Symlin prior to eating. If you forget to inject it prior to the meal, do not inject it after the meal. Do not double up on the doses if you forget one dose. Do not take Symlin if you are not eating. Do not take Symlin if you are not eating any carbohydrates at that meal.

Inject Symlin in your skin just like you would insulin.

ADJUSTING INSULIN

If sugar is below 100, lower Lantus by 5 units.

If you have any questions about changes that are needed in your insulin or other diabetic medications, you should call your physician.

MORE INFORMATION: www.symlin.com