



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Insulin Potentiation Therapy

This information describes the common uses of Insulin Potentiation Therapy, how it works, and its possible side effects.

Tell your healthcare providers about any dietary supplements you're taking, such as herbs, vitamins, minerals, and natural or home remedies. This will help them manage your care and keep you safe.

What is it?

Insulin potentiation therapy has not been shown to treat or prevent cancer.

Insulin potentiation therapy involves administering insulin at the same time as chemotherapy drugs, with the idea that lower chemotherapy doses are then needed because insulin lets more of the drug enter cells. However, this theory has not been proven.

In general, insulin should not be taken by non-

diabetics because it can decrease blood sugar to dangerously low levels, causing symptoms such as headache and delirium.

What are the potential uses and benefits?

- **To treat cancer**

Evidence is lacking to support this claim.

What are the side effects?

- Low blood sugar

What else do I need to know?

Do Not Take if:

- You **do not have diabetes**: In general, insulin should not been taken by non-diabetics because it can decrease blood sugar to dangerously low levels, causing symptoms such as headache and delirium.
- You are taking **hypoglycemic agents**: IPT can have additive effects.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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