

Windy City Whispers
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Insulin Pens

Since we have been in insulin delivery, I would next like to go to a few presentations on insulin pens. A group from Washington D.C. compared the accuracy of the FlexPen from Novo and the Opticlick from Aventis. For the ten unit dose, the FlexPen was accurate 99.5% of the time whereas the Opticlick was accurate only 90.5% of the time. Of the doses that were inaccurate for the Opticlick, 78% were under-dosed and 22% were over-dosed. At a 30 unit dose, the FlexPen was accurate 100% of the time and the Opticlick was accurate 87.5% of the time. One hundred percent of the doses that fell out for the Opticlick were under-dosed. *We have had a fair amount of problems with the Opticlick over time. This study merely demonstrates that it is not a particularly good pen. We are all very pleased that Aventis has come out with the SoloStar for Lantus which apparently is considerably more accurate and is easier to use.* A study from Denmark compared the Novo FlexPen with the Luxura pen from Lilly. They found that the instruction time was somewhat shorter for the FlexPen and that the FlexPen was objectively more intuitive to use by patients. No patients, however, found either of the devices difficult to learn. They did find the FlexPen a little easier to learn and simpler to use. They found that the pre-filled FlexPen was rated as more appropriate than the re-usable device in terms of size, weight, ease of carrying around and discreteness to use in public. On the other hand, the patients rated the appearance of the Luxura pen higher. Overall there was no difference in which pen patients would prefer to use. *I was pleased that Lilly came out with their two new pens. They are much more competitive and appreciated by the patients. They seem to be well received in our clinic.* Then there were two studies comparing the NovoPen IV versus the NovoPen III. Both studies found that the NovoPen IV was much more accepted by the patients. Unfortunately the NovoPen IV was not on display at the meetings because it is not available yet. We will have to look forward to its availability in the future. Finally, I should mention the I-port. I keep forgetting that this device is available and we really should be using it for some of our patients. It has a catheter that is very similar to an infusion set for a pump but then has a plastic bubble. The bubble is used for injections with the insulin then going through the catheter. Thus pens or syringes can be used to give insulin without any further penetration of the skin. The I-port seems to be very well tolerated by patients who really have difficulty with injections. It can be inserted and then used for several days before the next one is used. I have included a picture of it in the handout and we should keep this in mind for patients who really have shot woes

