

Type 2 Diabetes Medications: Biguanides

One class of diabetes medications is the **biguanides** (by-GWAH-nides).

How Do Biguanides Work?

Biguanides work by causing your liver to release stored glucose more slowly. They may also help your body respond to insulin. These actions keep your blood glucose levels more stable.

What Are Some Generic Names For Biguanides?

Some generic names for biguanides include metformin (met-FOR-min) and metformin (met-FOR-min) hydrochloride extended release.

What Are Some Brand Names For Biguanides?

Some brand names for biguanides include Glucophage[®] (GLOO-kó-fäj) and Glucophage (GLOO-kó-fäj) XR[®].

How Many Times A Day Should You Take Biguanides?

Your doctor may prescribe biguanides to be taken two to three times a day with meals.

What Are Some Potential Side Effects of Biguanides?

Biguanides may cause nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, gas, loss of appetite, or metallic taste. Side effects that occur at the beginning of treatment may stop with continued therapy. Metformin should not be taken by people who have heart, kidney, or liver disease or by people who consume more than 2-4 alcoholic drinks per week.

This handout contains general information on diabetes medication. It is not intended to replace medical advice. It is important to talk to your doctor or pharmacist about your dosage and any other questions that you may have.



Illinois Extension provides equal opportunity in program and employment. Trina Sprengelmeyer, BS and Karen Chapman-Novakofski RD, LD, PhD, 2004.