

## Type 2 Diabetes Medications: Classes of Medications

The class of a medication tells you how a medication works. There are six major classes of oral glucose lowering medications.

- **Sulfonylureas**
- **Meglitinides**
- **Biguanides**
- **Alpha-glucosidase inhibitors**
- **Thiazolidinediones**
- **D-Phenylalanine derivatives**

### **Sulfonylureas** (sul-fah-nil-yoo-REE-ahs)

Sulfonylureas work by stimulating insulin secretion in the pancreas and by helping the body better use the insulin it makes.

### **Meglitinides** (meh-GLIH-tin-ides)

Meglitinides work by stimulating insulin secretion in the presence of glucose.

### **Biguanides** (by-GWAH-nides)

Biguanides work by decreasing the amount of glucose made in the liver.

### **Alpha-Glucosidase** (AL-fa-gloo-KOH-sih-days) **Inhibitors**

Alpha-Glucosidase Inhibitors work by slowing the absorption of glucose in the digestive tract.

### **Thiazolidinediones** (THIGH-ah-ZO-li-deen-DYE-owns)

Thiazolidinediones work by increasing the body's sensitivity to insulin.

### **D-Phenylalanine** (dee-fen-nel-AL-ah-neen) **Derivatives**

D-Phenylalanine Derivatives work by helping the pancreas make insulin more quickly.

*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.