

## Type 2 Diabetes: Oral Glucose-Lowering Medications

People with type 2 diabetes have higher than normal “blood sugar” or blood glucose levels. Healthy eating, exercise, and losing weight will help lower blood glucose levels. However, often people must also take one or more types of diabetes medications to control their blood glucose level. Below is a list of glucose lowering medications and some important facts about each medication. Your doctor will prescribe the type and amount of medication that you should be taking. If you have questions about your medication or do not know what you are taking, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

<b>Class of Medication</b>	<b>Generic Name</b>	<b>Brand Name</b>	<b>How it Works</b>	<b>Usual Number of Doses*</b>	<b>Usual Medication Time*</b>	<b>Potential Side Effects</b>
Sulfonylureas (first and second generation)	Glimepiride Glyburide Glyburide Glyburide Chlorpropamide Acetohexamide Glipizide Tolbutamide Tolazamide	Amaryl® DiaBeta® Glynase® Micronase® Diabinese® Dymelor ® Glucotrol® Orinase® Tolinase®	Stimulates insulin secretion in the pancreas and helps the body better use the insulin it makes.	Once or twice a day depending on the specific sulfonylurea.	Depends on the specific sulfonylurea, but once a day doses are usually taken just before breakfast and twice a day doses are usually taken right before breakfast and right before supper.	May cause indigestion, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, constipation, weight gain, skin rash, itching, or hypoglycemia (low blood glucose). The risk of hypoglycemia increases when you drink alcohol, are very active for a prolonged period, and/or eat less food or fewer calories.**
Meglitinide	Repaglinide	Prandin ®	Stimulates insulin secretion in the presence of glucose.	Up to three times a day.	From 30 minutes before to just before a meal. If you skip a meal do not take your medicine.	May cause weight gain or hypoglycemia (low blood glucose). The risk of hypoglycemia increases when you drink alcohol, are very active for a prolonged period, and/or eat less food or fewer calories.**
Biguanides	Metformin Metformin hydrochloride	Glucophage® Glucophage XR®	Decreases the amount of glucose made in the liver.	Two to three times a day.	With a meal.	May cause nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, gas, or metallic taste. Side effects that occur at the beginning of treatment and may stop with continued therapy. ***
Alpha-glucosidase inhibitors	Acarbose Miglitol	Precose® Glyset®	Slows the absorption of glucose in the digestive tract.	Up to three times a day.	With the first bite of every meal.	Gas, diarrhea, and abdominal discomfort may occur during the first few weeks of therapy. **

Thiazolidine-diones	Rosiglitazone	Avandia <sup>®</sup>	Increases the body's sensitivity to insulin.	Either once or twice a day.	At the same time each day either in the morning or in the evening.	May cause weight gain, headache, swelling in the ankles and legs, and/or fatigue. May make birth control pills less effective. During treatment, blood should be periodically tested to make sure the drug is not causing any liver problems. Nausea, abdominal pain, dark urine, or yellowing of the skin may indicate a serious problem and a health care provider should be contacted. **
	Pioglitazone Troglitazone	Actos <sup>®</sup> Rezulin <sup>®</sup>		Once a day.	At about the same time each day.	
D-Phenylalanine derivatives	Nateglinide	Starlix <sup>®</sup>	Helps the pancreas make insulin more quickly.	Up to three times a day.	From 30 minutes before to just before a meal. If you skip a meal do not take your medicine.	May cause hypoglycemia (low blood sugar). People with liver disease should not take nateglinide. **

\* Number of doses and medication time should be set by your health care provider.

\*\*Alcohol should be avoided while taking any kind of glucose lowering medication because dangerously low blood sugar levels may result.

\*\*\*Metformin should not be taken by people who consume more than 2-4 alcoholic drinks per week or people with kidney problems.

*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.*