

Type 2 Diabetes: Oral Glucose Lowering Medications and Insulin

If you have type 2 diabetes your body can usually make insulin, but it cannot use it correctly. A healthy diet, exercise, and weight loss can help you to better use the insulin that you make. You may also need medication to help regulate your blood glucose levels.

There are two types of medicine that are often prescribed for people with type 2 diabetes:

- **Oral Glucose Lowering Medications**
- **Insulin**

Oral glucose lowering medications also called **diabetes medications** are pills taken by mouth that lower your blood glucose levels.

Insulin is a chemical usually made in your body that helps turn the food you eat into energy. If you do not make enough you may need to take insulin. Sometimes the amount of insulin you make is enough, but it cannot be used properly, and therefore you must also take insulin. Insulin can not be taken by mouth. You can only take insulin by shots.

Depending on your condition your doctor may prescribe one of the following to treat your high blood glucose.

- **A glucose lowering medication.**
- **A combination of 2 or more glucose lowering medicines.**
- **Insulin shots.**
- **Glucose lowering medication and insulin shots.**

Whether you are using glucose lowering medications, insulin, or any combination of the two, you must talk to your doctor about the specifics of the medications that you are using.

It is important to remember that glucose lowering medications and/or insulin never take the place of healthy eating or exercise.

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.