



Medications and Diabetes

Understanding the Importance of
Oral Medications

Understanding the importance of oral medications in managing diabetes

Once diagnosed with diabetes, you and your healthcare professional will work together to develop a treatment plan to help you achieve blood glucose levels within your target range. To help you learn about and manage diabetes, your practitioner may recommend a diabetes self-management training program – available at local hospitals and covered by Medicare and most insurance plans.

These programs are designed to provide you with the knowledge and skills to understand key aspects of your treatment plan, including healthy meal planning, physical activity, blood glucose monitoring and medication therapy. Other topics include managing high and low blood glucose levels, preventing complications, taking care of diabetes when you are sick, and other topics relating to living with diabetes. This TRUEinsight™ Guide focuses on understanding your oral diabetes medications and how they help to control blood glucose levels.



Oral diabetes medications (pills)

People diagnosed with type 2 diabetes have several problems occurring in their bodies that cause hyperglycemia or high blood glucose levels. These problems may include: a pancreas that doesn't produce enough insulin, muscle cells that become resistant to insulin, and a liver that releases too much glucose. The goal of oral medication therapy is aimed at correcting these problems so that blood glucose levels are within target guidelines.

Types of Pills

There are several types of diabetes pills, and each type works on a different area in the body to lower blood glucose levels. Some types of medications work by helping the pancreas secrete more insulin, other medications work by stopping the liver from making glucose and other types work by making the muscle cells become less resistant to insulin.



Pill combinations

Some oral medications are a combination of two different types of diabetes medicines. These pills allow you to get the benefits of both medications to help lower blood glucose levels. For example, you may take a combination of medications that helps the pancreas release more insulin and also helps the cells to become more sensitive to the insulin. This combination effect may help to control your blood glucose levels better than just one medication. In order to safely and effectively understand and adhere to your medication schedule, it is important for you to understand the name of your medication(s), the right dosage and how often you should take your pills. Write down this information, and keep it in your purse or wallet so that you can always have it on hand. Discuss your medication plan with your diabetes healthcare professional.



Understanding Side Effects And Illness

Ask about possible side effects, what you should do if you forget to take a dose of medicine or you get sick, and what types of over-the-counter medicines may interfere with your diabetes pills. If you notice any side effect or you do not feel well when taking your medication, then consult your diabetes healthcare professional for advice.



WARNING

Blood glucose monitoring and medication therapy

Frequent blood glucose monitoring is important when beginning on diabetes medications or when your healthcare professional changes or adjusts your medications. A consensus of diabetes healthcare professionals recommends that people with type 2 diabetes on oral medications should monitor their blood glucose levels as often as needed to achieve target blood glucose levels.

Your blood glucose results will determine if your medication is working to lower blood glucose levels. If you are taking your medications and following your nutrition plan but you notice that your blood glucose levels continue to run high or too low, then call your diabetes healthcare professional and report your blood glucose results.

Adjusting dosages and medications

Your healthcare professional may want to adjust your dosage or change your medication to help you achieve target blood glucose goals. People with type 2 diabetes who have difficulty keeping blood glucose levels in target range may need to take more medication, add a new medication or start on insulin.

The goal is control

Remember, the goal of medication therapy is to keep blood glucose levels in your target range. Whatever your medication plan includes, your diabetes healthcare team will work with you to make sure you understand your medications and how to take them safely.



Oral medications at a glance schedule

There are now six different types of diabetes medications, plus some that combine two different types of medications into one pill.

Medication Type	How The Medication Works To Lower Blood Glucose Levels
Sulfonylureas	Help the pancreas to release more insulin
Biguanides	Keep the liver from releasing too much glucose
Alpha-Glucosidase Inhibitors	Slow the digestion of carbohydrates during a meal — keep blood glucose levels from rising too high
Meglitinides	Help the pancreas release more insulin
Thiazolidinediones	Help muscle cells to become more sensitive to insulin
DPP-4 Inhibitors	Help the pancreas to release more insulin and keep the liver from releasing too much glucose



Keep track of your medication schedule

Keeping a log book can help you remember to take your medications and understand the effects that they have on your blood glucose levels. Write down the name of your medication(s), the dosage and the time of day you take your medication(s).

Also, include when you should test your blood glucose levels while taking the medication. Show your medication log book to your diabetes healthcare team so that they can stay informed of your medication schedule and make changes as needed.



Your Medication Log Book

Medication Name	Medication Dose	Time Of Day To Take My Medication	Time Of Day To Check My Blood Glucose Levels	Side Effects Or Symptoms To Report To Healthcare Professional
Glucotrol XL	5mg tablet	Take one pill every morning with breakfast	Before eat and 2-3 hours after eat	None



**For more information
about diabetes visit
www.niprodiagnostics.com**

Contact your insurance company or local diabetes association to find out if you qualify to receive diabetes self-management education. Remember, the more you learn about diabetes, the better you will be able to understand and manage your daily self-care program.

Below are some references for additional information about diabetes.

**American Association of
Diabetes Educators**

800-TEAM-UP-4
www.aadenet.org

**Juvenile Diabetes Research
Foundation International**

1-800-533-2873
www.jdrf.org

Nipro Diagnostics, Inc.
www.niprodiagnostics.com

Information contained in this brochure was sourced through:

American Diabetes Association, Resource Guide 2008; Diabetes Forecast, January 2008, pg. RG 11-14.

American Diabetes Association Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes, Diabetes Care, January 2008, pgs. S2-S54.

Life With Diabetes: A Series of Teaching Outlines, 2nd edition by the Michigan Diabetes Research and Training Center; lead authors Martha M. Funnell, M.S., R.N., C.D.E.; Marilyn S. Arnold, M.S., R.D., C.D.E.; Patricia A. Barr, B.S.; Andrea Lasichak, M.S., R.D., C.D.E.; 2000 by American Diabetes Association.



**National Institute of
Diabetes and
Digestive and Kidney
Diseases, National
Diabetes Information
Clearinghouse**

800-860-8747
www.niddk.nih.gov