



Diabetes Medication



You should know if you have type 1 or type 2 diabetes. If you have type 1, you must take insulin. If you have type 2, you may take a pill instead of or along with insulin.

Below is a list of the common drugs used to control diabetes, how they work and the common side effects.

It is important to know the name of the diabetes drug you are taking and

any of the likely side effects. You should report side effects to your doctor, nurse or diabetes educator. Look at your insulin or pill bottle to see what drug you are taking.

INSULIN

How it works Insulin lowers blood glucose (blood sugar). There are many different types of insulins. They differ based on onset (when the insulin begins to work), peak (when it is working the hardest), and duration of action (how long it works).

Examples	Generic name	Brand name
Quick-acting insulins	Humalog (insulin lispro)	
	Novolog (insulin aspart)	
Short-acting insulin	Humulin R	
	Novolin R	
Slow-acting insulins	Humulin N (NPH)	
	Novolin N (NPH)	
	Humulin L (lente)	
	Novolin L (lente)	
Long-acting insulins	Humulin U (ultralente)	
	Lantus (insulin glargine)	
Mixtures (2 insulins are pre-mixed)	Humulin 50/50	
	Humulin 70/30	
	Humalog Mix 75/25	
	Novolin 70/30	
	Novolog Mix 70/30	

Side effects Low blood glucose, weight gain, allergic reaction (rare)

SULFONYLUREA

How it works These drugs cause the pancreas to make more insulin. (The drugs listed are the more common sulfonylureas prescribed).

Examples	Generic name	Brand name
	glimepiride	Amaryl
	glipizide	Glucotrol
	glipizide	Glucotrol XL
	glyburide	DiaBeta
	glyburide	Glynase PreTab
	glyburide	Micronase

Side effects Low blood glucose, weight gain, rash, nausea

MEGLITINIDE / D-PHENYLALANINE

How it works These drugs cause the pancreas to make more insulin and act more quickly.

Examples	Generic name	Brand name
	repaglinide	Prandin
	nateglinide	Starlix

Side effects Low blood glucose (rare)

BIGUANIDE

How it works These drugs reduce the amount of glucose that is made by the liver and helps the body better use insulin.

Examples	Generic name	Brand name
	metformin	Glucophage
	metformin	Glucophage XR

Side effects Nausea, diarrhea, gas, loss of appetite

THIAZOLIDINEDIONE (GLITAZONE OR TZD)

How it works These drugs help the body cells better use insulin and reduce the amount of glucose that is made by the liver.

Examples	Generic name	Brand name
	pioglitazone	Actos
	rosiglitazone	Avandia

Side effects

- Liver damage (nausea, vomiting, fatigue, dark urine, abdominal pain)
- Fluid retention/or swelling
- Decrease how well some birth control pills work

ALPHA-GLUCOSIDASE INHIBITORS

How it works These drugs help keep blood sugar in target range after a meal.

Examples	Generic name	Brand name
	acarbose	Precose
	miglitol	Glyset

Side effects Gas, bloating, diarrhea, stomach pain

COMBINATION DRUGS

How it works Sometimes several drugs are combined and sold as one pill. The action is based on the two drugs that have been combined.

Examples	Generic name	Brand name
	glyburide & metformin	Glucovance
	glipizide & metformin	Metaglip
	rosiglitazone & metformin	Avandamet

Side effects Because you are taking a drug that combines two medications, it is possible you will have side effects from both types of drugs. These can include nausea, low blood sugar, weight gain, rash, diarrhea, excess gas, loss of appetite, liver damage, fluid retention/swelling.

