

Diabetes Medicines Used for Type 2 Diabetes

There are many types of diabetes medicines:

Pills, non-insulin shots and insulin

- People with Type 1 diabetes always take insulin.
- People with Type 2 diabetes try to control their diabetes with meal planning, exercise and weight loss. If meal planning and exercise do not lower blood sugar, your doctor may want you to take diabetes medication.

Diabetes is a progressive disease. It is common for your medications to suddenly not work as well as they did, so medication changes may be made.

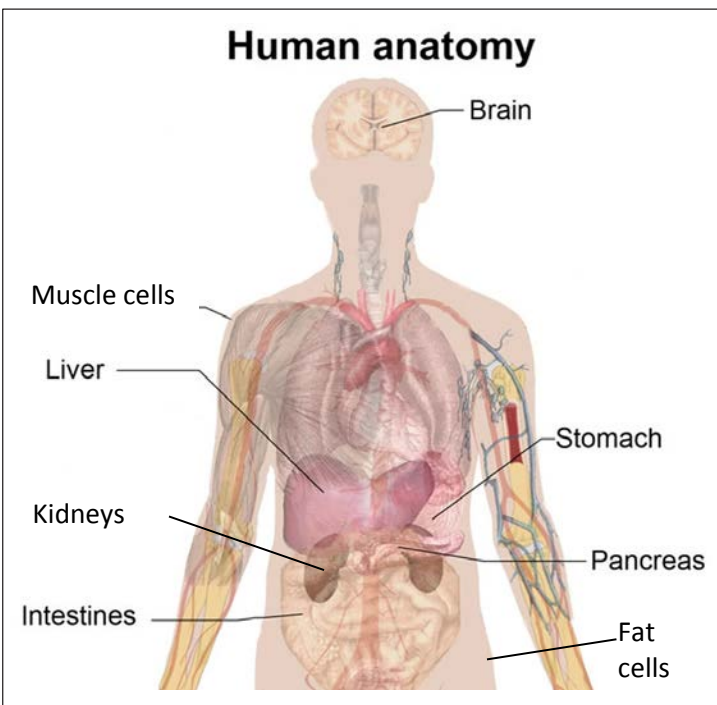
The different types of diabetes medication all help to lower your blood sugar but might work in different parts of the body. People with both type 1 and type 2 diabetes may need more than one type of diabetes medicine.

How do diabetes medicines work?

Diabetes medicines work in these places in your body.

- Pancreas - Liver - Fat cells
- Intestines - Brain - Muscle cells
- Kidneys - Stomach

See the Diabetes Medicine Chart for more details on your specific medicine.



Important points about taking medicine

- Don't stop taking your medications without talking with your doctor.
- Carry a list with you of all your medicines, both prescription and medicines you buy over the counter.
- If you have trouble remembering to take your medicines use a pill planner or talk to your pharmacist, doctor, or diabetes educator.
- Show your list of medicines to your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, diabetes educator and family.
- Ask questions
 - Why do I take this?
 - How much do I take?
 - When and how do I take this?
 - What if I forget a dose?
 - What are the side effects?
 - What should I do if I get the side effects?

Concerned about medication costs?

- Your insurance company is a good place to start: Ask if your medications are in the health plan and the expected costs.
- Talk with your pharmacist or doctor: Ask if there are similar medications that may be more affordable or if discounts are available.
- Websites like goodrx.com, rxassist.com and needymeds.org may be helpful or call several pharmacies to ask the price of your medication.
- Medicare D enrollment is offered once a year. During the 6 - week period, Medicare patients may choose a plan with the best benefits for your medicine costs.
- Never stop taking your diabetes medications because you cannot afford them. Contact your insurance company, your pharmacist or your doctor to ask for help.

Diabetes Medicine Chart

Trade	Generic	Where and how it works	Possible side effects	Information
Micronase Diabeta Glynase	glyburide	Pancreas: Causes the pancreas to make and release more insulin	Low blood sugar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take 30 minutes before meals • Tell your doctor if you are allergic to sulfa
Glucotrol Glucotrol XL Amaryl	glipizide glimepiride	Pancreas: Causes the pancreas to make and release more insulin	Low blood sugar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take before or with meals • Tell your doctor if you are allergic to sulfa
Prandin Starlix	repaglinide nateglinide	Pancreas: Causes the pancreas to make and release more insulin	Low blood sugar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take before or with meals • Tell your doctor if you are allergic to sulfa
Glucophage Glucophage XR Riomet (liquid) Glumetza Fortamet	metformin metformin XL	Liver: Reduces the amount of sugar the liver makes Muscle and fat cells: Helps the body make better use of insulin in muscle and fat cells	Diarrhea, nausea, bloating, loss of appetite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take with a meal • Your doctor may check your kidney and liver function before you start taking this medicine • You will need to stop this medicine for a short time if you have an X-ray with dye • You should not drink alcohol in excess while taking this medication
Actos Avandia	pioglitazone rosiglitazone	Muscle and fat cells: Helps the body use insulin better in the muscle and fat cells (decreases insulin resistance)	Weight gain, swelling in lower legs, feet or hands, heart disease, liver dysfunction, anemia, bone loss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can take with or without a meal • Your doctor may check your liver function before you start taking this medication • You may need to stop this medication if you have congestive heart failure or serious liver problems • May take up to 6 weeks to work in your body
Precose Glyset	acarbose miglitol	Intestines: Slows the absorption of carbohydrate foods (starches)	Gas, diarrhea, stomach pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take with the first bite of a meal • You should not take this medicine if you have ongoing problems with diarrhea or constipation
Invokana Farxiga Jardiance	canagliflozin dapagliflozin empagliflozin	Kidneys: Decreases reabsorption of blood sugar and causes it to be removed in urine.	Female genital infections, urinary infections Rare: diabetic ketoacidosis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take with first meal of the day • Your doctor may check your kidney function before you start taking this medication
Januvia Onglyza Tradjenta Nesina	sitagliptin saxagliptin linagliptin alogliptin	Pancreas: Increases insulin release and decreases glucose production	Upper respiratory infection, headache, low blood sugar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take with first meal of the day
Cycloset	bromocriptine mesylate	Brain: Increases dopamine activity in the brain. It is unclear how it helps lower blood sugar.	Nausea, weakness, headache, dizziness, fatigue, runny or stuffy nose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take within 2 hours of waking • Take this medication with food

Trade	Generic	Where and how it works	Possible side effects	Information
Non-insulin injections				
Byetta	exenatide	Pancreas: increases insulin release Stomach: slows digestion Liver: decreases glucose production Brain: reduces appetite	Nausea, vomiting, low blood sugar, stomach pain. Rare: pancreatitis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inject Byetta up to 60 minutes before breakfast and up to 60 minutes before supper • You should not take this medication if you skip a meal • You will need to eat at least 30 grams of carbohydrates after taking this medicine • Rotate injection sites
Bydureon	exenatide XR			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inject Bydureon once a week
Victoza	liraglutide	Pancreas: increases insulin release Stomach: slows digestion	Nausea, vomiting, reduced appetite, slight weight loss, low blood sugar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inject Victoza one time a day • Rotate injection sites
Tanzeum	albiglutide	Liver: decreases glucose production	Rare: pancreatitis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inject Tanzeum once a week • Rotate injection sites
Trulicity	dulaglutide	Brain: reduces appetite	In animal studies: medullary thyroid cancer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inject Trulicity once a week • Rotate injections sites
Symlin	pramlintide	Liver: decreases glucose production Stomach: slows digestion Brain: reduces appetite	Nausea, low blood sugar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inject before meals • This medication is taken in combination with rapid acting insulin. Symlin can also be used in people with type 1 diabetes • Rotate injection sites

A pill that combines two medicines may be prescribed. Examples of combination pills: Glucovance (glyburide and metformin), Invokamet (Invokana and metformin), Metaglip (glipizide and metformin), Kombiglyze XR (saxagliptin and metformin), ActoplusMet (pioglitazone and metformin), Avandamet (rosiglitazone and metformin), Avandaryl (rosiglitazone and glimepiride), Oseni (alogliptin and pioglitazone), Kazano (alogliptin and metformin), Prandimet (prandin and metformin), Janumet (Januvia and metformin), Janumet XR (Januvia XR and metformin), Jentaduet (Tradjenta and metformin), Glyxambi (Jardiance and Tradjenta), Xigduo XR (Farxiga and metformin) and Duetact (Actos and Amaryl).

See the Diabetes Medicine table to learn how each medicine works and its possible side effects.