

Control Diabetes: Why do I need Medicine?

I only have type 2 diabetes.

If you have type 2 diabetes, your pancreas makes insulin. But your body cannot use the insulin you make correctly. The medicine helps your insulin work better.

Here are some key points.

- Pills that lower blood sugar (glucose) never take the place of healthy eating and exercise.
- If your blood sugar gets too low more than a few times in a few days, call your doctor.
- Take your diabetes pills even if you are sick. If you cannot eat much, call your doctor.
- Just because your doctor changes or adds medicine does not mean it's your fault.

What do I need to know about diabetes pills?

Many types of pills can help people with type 2 diabetes lower their blood sugar (glucose). Each type of pill helps lower blood sugar in a different way. Check the chart on the back side of this fact sheet. Each row outlined boldly is a type of diabetes medicine.



You may take more than one kind of pill. As each pill works in its own way, you may get better results using more than one type of pill. Always take your pill(s) as your doctor tells you to do. If you are not sure how to take the pill, ask your doctor. You can also ask your pharmacist.

Your doctor may start you out on one type of pill. If the pill does not lower your blood sugar enough, your doctor can increase the amount you take. Your doctor may also add a new pill. You may then take two types of pills.

At some point your doctor might ask you to take insulin with one of the diabetes pills. Medicines are changed to get your blood sugar numbers as close to normal as possible. This prevents damage to your body from diabetes. Your doctor will work with you to get the best treatment plan to keep you living well with diabetes. Always tell your doctor about any side effects.

What are side effects?

Side effects are changes that may happen in your body when you take a new pill. Ask your doctor what to expect when you are given new pills. Ask what the side effects might be.

Some side effects happen only when you start to take new pills. Then they go away.

Some side effects happen only once in a while. You may get used to them or learn how to manage them.

Some side effects are more severe. Tell your doctor but do not stop taking the medicine until your doctor tells you to stop. Your doctor may try another medicine.



Brand name*	Generic Name**	How It Works	How You Take It
Amaryl Diabeta Glucotrol Micronase	Glimepiride Glyburide Glipizide Tolazamide	Helps your pancreas make more insulin.	Take 30 minutes before your meal.
Glucophage	Metformin	Helps your liver put out less glycogen (stored sugar).	Take just before you begin to eat your meal.
Precose	Acarbose	Slows down the time it takes for your body to break down food into sugar.	Take with the first bites of food.
Prandin	Repaglinide	Helps your pancreas make more insulin.	Take with meals
Humulin R	Regular human insulin	Gives your body insulin	Depends upon the type. Regular insulin is injected 30 minutes before your meal.

* There are other names for this type of medicine.

** Many types of insulin are now available.

For more information

Contact a **Diabetes Teacher** (nurses, dietitians, pharmacists, and other health professionals)

To find a diabetes teacher near you, call:

The American Association of Diabetes Educators toll-free at 1-800-TEAMUP4 (1-800-832-6874)

or visit the website at www.aadenet.org and click on "Find an Educator."