



Diabetes Pills

If you have Type 2 Diabetes, your pancreas either makes too little insulin, or your body can not use the insulin you make. When you first find out you have diabetes, a meal plan and exercise may help lower your blood sugar. If these do not work, your doctor may add one or more type of diabetes pills to lower your blood sugar. After a few years, you may need to take insulin shots with your diabetes pills. Each type of pill helps lower blood sugar in a different way.

Type of Pill	Generic Name	Brand Name	How it Works	When to Take Pill	Side Effects	Special Tips
Sulfonylurea	Glimepiride	Amaryl	Causes the pancreas to make more insulin.	If you take a pill once a day, take it before breakfast. If you take a pill twice a day, take one before breakfast and one before supper.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •low blood sugar •stomach problems •weight gain •skin rash or itching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Take pills at the same time each day. • Ask your pharmacist or doctor when you should take your pill.
	Glipizide	Glucotrol (XL)				
	Glyburide	DiaBeta, Glynase, Micronase				
	Chlorpropamide	Diabenese				
Meglitinide	Repaglinide	Prandin	Causes the pancreas to make more insulin.	Take from one to 30 minutes before eating a meal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •low blood sugar •weight gain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Lowers blood sugar about one hour after you take it and is out of your body in about 3-4 hours. •If you skip a meal, do not take your Prandin/Starlix.
D-phenylalanine	Nateglinide	Starlix				
Alpha-Glucosidase Inhibitor	Acarbose	Precose	Blocks the enzymes that digest the carbohydrates you eat.	Three times a day - at each meal. Take with the first bite of the meal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •May cause stomach problems (gas, bloating, diarrhea) that usually goes away in a few weeks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Directly related to carbohydrate content of meal so if you skip a meal or are sick and not eating, do not take your pill. •You need to treat low blood sugar with glucose tablets or gel.
	Miglitol	Glyset				
Biguanide	Metformin	Glucophage (XR)	Helps the liver make less sugar.	Take 2 to 3 times a day with meals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •stomach problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •You should have kidney function tests at start of therapy and regularly thereafter. •If you are having a test with dye or surgery, tell your doctor. •Rarely, Glucophage can cause flu like symptoms and trouble breathing.

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Thiazolidinedione	Pioglitazone Rosiglitazone	Actos Avandia	Helps your body better use the insulin it makes.	Taken without regard to meals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •weight gain •liver damage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •You should have liver tests at the start of therapy, every two months of the first year and repeatedly regularly thereafter. It is very important to get these tests done when your doctor orders them.
Combination Agents	Glyburide and Metformin	Glucovance	Pancreas makes more insulin and liver makes less sugar.	Once or twice a day with meals	Same as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Glyburide and Metformin • Glipizide and Metformin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Same special tips as with Glyburide and Metformin. •Same special tips as with Glipizide and Metformin.
	Glipizide and Metformin	Metaglip				
	Rosiglitazone and Metformin	Avandamet	Helps your body better use insulin and the liver to make less sugar.	Once or twice a day with meals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rosiglitazone and Metformin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Same special tips as with Rosiglitazone and Metformin

Tips for Taking Your Pills:

- **If you forget to take a pill:**
 - If you take only a morning pill, take the pill later in the day as soon as you remember.
 - If you forget until the next day, do not double up pills - it may cause a low blood sugar reaction.
 - If you take a morning and evening pill and forget the morning dose, do not double up pills - it may cause a low blood sugar reaction.
- Take your pills as ordered, not just when you think your blood sugar is high.
- Learn the names of your diabetes pills, the dose, and how often to take them.
- Learn the color and shape of your pills - if the color changes, ask the pharmacist why. Throw away discolored pills.
- Do not switch pills with others.
- Take pills even when sick - often an illness will cause blood sugar to increase.
- Call your doctor if you have side effects, but never stop taking your pills.
- Never use pills past the expiration date.

Please call **1-800-SENTARA (736-8272)** to sign up for the **“Healthy Living with Diabetes”** classes.