

Diabetes, Type 2: Noninsulin Medicines

There are different types of noninsulin medicines for diabetes. Each medicine works in a different way. But they all help you control your blood sugar. Some types help your body make insulin to lower your blood sugar. Others lower how much insulin your body needs. Some can slow how fast your body digests sugars. And some can remove extra glucose through your urine.

You may need to take more than one medicine for diabetes. Taking two or more medicines may work better to lower your blood sugar level than taking one medicine alone.

Metformin

How it works:

Metformin lowers how much glucose the liver makes. And it helps you respond better to insulin. And it also lowers the amount of stored sugar your liver releases when you are not eating.

Sulfonylureas

How they work:

These help your body release more insulin. Some work for many hours. They can cause low blood sugar if you don't eat as planned. An example is glipizide.

Thiazolidinediones

How they work:

These reduce the amount of glucose in your blood. They also help you respond better to insulin. An example is pioglitazone.



Meglitinides

How they work:

These help your body release insulin. They also help slow how your body digests sugars. They can keep your blood sugar from rising too fast after you eat.

Alpha-glucosidase inhibitors

How they work:

These keep starches from breaking down. This means that they lower the amount of glucose absorbed when you eat. They do not help your body make more insulin. So they will not cause low blood sugar unless they are used with other medicines for diabetes.

GLP-1 receptor agonists

How they work:

These help your body make a protein that can

raise your insulin level and make you less hungry. They're given as shots or pills. An example is semaglutide.

DPP-4 inhibitors

How they work:

These help your body raise your level of insulin after you eat. They also help your body

make less of a hormone that raises blood sugar. An example is alogliptin.

SGLT2 inhibitors

How they work:

These help to remove extra glucose through your urine. They may also help some people lose weight. An example is ertugliflozin.



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