Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Glipizide and Metformin

This information from Lexicomp® explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Warning

- Rarely, metformin may cause too much lactic acid in the blood (lactic acidosis). The risk is higher in people who have kidney problems, liver problems, heart failure, use alcohol, or take other drugs like topiramate. The risk is also higher in people who are 65 or older and in people who are having surgery, an exam or test with contrast, or other procedures. If lactic acidosis happens, it can lead to other health problems and can be deadly. Kidney tests may be done while taking this drug.
- Do not take this drug if you have a very bad infection, low oxygen, or a lot of fluid loss (dehydration).
- Call your doctor right away if you have signs of too much lactic acid in the blood (lactic acidosis) like confusion; fast breathing; fast or slow heartbeat; a heartbeat that does not feel normal; very bad stomach pain, upset stomach, or throwing up; feeling very sleepy; shortness of breath; feeling very tired or weak; very bad dizziness; feeling cold; or muscle pain or cramps.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to lower blood sugar in patients with high blood sugar (diabetes).

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you are allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had.
- If you have any of these health problems: Acidic blood problem, kidney disease, liver disease, or type 1 diabetes.
- If you have had a recent heart attack or stroke.
- If you are not able to eat or drink like normal, including before certain procedures or surgery.
- If you are having an exam or test with contrast or have had one within the past 48 hours, talk with your doctor.
- If you are pregnant or may be pregnant. Do not take this drug if you are pregnant.
- If you are breast-feeding or plan to breast-feed.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Talk with your doctor before you drink alcohol.
- Avoid driving and doing other tasks or actions that call for you to be alert until you see how this drug affects you.
- Do not drive if your blood sugar has been low. There is a greater chance of you having a crash.
- Be careful if you have low levels of an enzyme called G6PD. Anemia may happen. Low levels of G6PD may be more likely in patients of African, South Asian, Middle Eastern, and Mediterranean descent.
- Check your blood sugar as you have been told by your doctor.
- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.
- Long-term treatment with metformin may lead to low vitamin B-12 levels. If you have ever had low vitamin B-12 levels, talk with your doctor.
- If you also take colesevelam, take it at least 4 hours after you take this drug.
- This drug may raise the chance of death from heart disease. Talk with your doctor.
- It may be harder to control blood sugar during times of stress such as fever, infection, injury, or surgery. A change in physical activity, exercise, or diet may also affect blood sugar.
- If diarrhea happens or you are throwing up, call your doctor. You will need to drink more fluids to keep from losing too much fluid.
- Be careful in hot weather or while being active. Drink lots of fluids to stop fluid loss.
- If you have been taking this drug for a long time or at high doses, it may

not work as well and you may need higher doses to get the same effect. This is known as tolerance. Call your doctor if this drug stops working well. Do not take more than ordered.

- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.

What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Feeling very tired or weak.
- Low blood sugar can happen. The chance may be raised when this drug is used with other drugs for diabetes. Signs may be dizziness, headache, feeling sleepy or weak, shaking, fast heartbeat, confusion, hunger, or sweating. Call your doctor right away if you have any of these signs. Follow what you have been told to do for low blood sugar. This may include taking glucose tablets, liquid glucose, or some fruit juices.
- It is common to have stomach problems like upset stomach, throwing up, or diarrhea when you start taking this drug. If you have stomach problems later during treatment, call your doctor right away. This may be a sign of an acid health problem in the blood (lactic acidosis).

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Dizziness or headache.
- Diarrhea, upset stomach, or throwing up.
- Stomach pain.
- Muscle pain.
- Signs of a common cold.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-332-1088. You may also report side effects at https://www.fda.gov/medwatch.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- Take with meals.
- Follow the diet and workout plan that your doctor told you about.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- Take a missed dose as soon as you think about it, with a meal.
- If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

- Store at room temperature in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else’s drugs.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. Check with your pharmacist. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer

This generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based

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If you have any questions, contact a member of your care team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5 p.m., during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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