Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Pioglitazone and Glimepiride

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ 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.

## Brand Names: US

Duetact

### Warning

- This drug may cause or make heart failure worse. Tell your doctor if you have had heart failure. This drug may need to be avoided with some types of heart failure. You will be watched closely while starting this drug and if your dose is raised. Call your doctor right away if you have swelling in the arms or legs, shortness of breath or trouble breathing (especially when lying down), sudden weight gain, or you feel very tired.

## What is this drug used for?

- It is used to help control blood sugar in people with type 2 diabetes.

## What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug? For all patients taking 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 or bladder cancer.
- If you have type 1 diabetes. Do not use this drug to treat type 1 diabetes.

## Children:

- If the patient is a child. Do not give this drug to a child.

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.
- Do not drive if your blood sugar has been low. There is a greater chance of you having a crash.
- Have your blood work and other lab tests checked as you have been told by your doctor.
- Low blood sugar may happen with this drug. Very low blood sugar can lead to seizures, passing out, long lasting brain damage, and sometimes death. Talk with the doctor.
- Check your blood sugar as you have been told by 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, diet, or weight may also affect blood sugar.
- Talk with your doctor before you drink alcohol.
- Follow the diet and exercise plan that your doctor told you about.
- If you also take colesevelam, take it at least 4 hours after

you take this drug.

- The chance of getting bladder cancer may be raised when taking this drug. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug may raise the chance of death from heart disease. Talk with your doctor.
- This drug may raise the chance of broken bones. The chance may be higher in females. Broken bones were seen after people took this drug for 1 year. Most of the broken bones happened in the upper arm, hand, or foot. Talk with your doctor about how to keep your bones healthy or if you have any questions.
- 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.
- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- There is a chance of pregnancy in people of childbearing age who have not been ovulating. If you want to avoid pregnancy, use birth control while taking this drug.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan on getting pregnant, or are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to you and the baby.

## 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.
- Change in eyesight.
- Pain when passing urine or blood in urine.
- Passing urine more often.
- Bone pain.
- Feeling very tired or weak.
- Severe dizziness or passing out.
- 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.

- A severe skin reaction (Stevens-Johnson syndrome/toxic epidermal necrolysis) may happen. It can cause severe health problems that may not go away, and sometimes death. Get medical help right away if you have signs like red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin (with or without fever); red or irritated eyes; or sores in your mouth, throat, nose, or eyes.
- Liver problems have rarely happened with this drug. Sometimes, this has been deadly. Call your doctor right away if you have signs of liver problems like dark urine, tiredness, decreased appetite, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.

## 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:

- Headache.
- Diarrhea.
- Upset stomach.

- Muscle pain.
- Signs of a common cold.
- Sinus pain.
- Sore throat.
- Weight gain.
- Pain in arms or legs.

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 the first meal of the day.
- 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?

- Skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time unless your doctor tells you to do something else.
- 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.
- Store in the original container to protect from light.
- Keep lid tightly closed.
- 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.

- This drug comes with an extra patient fact sheet called a Medication Guide. Read it with care. Read it again each time this drug is refilled. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with the doctor, 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 on the health care provider's examination and assessment of a patient's specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care

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If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

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

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