Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Saxagliptin and Metformin

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

Kombiglyze XR [DSC]

Brand Names: Canada

Komboglyze

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, mitochondrial disease, use alcohol, or take certain other drugs, including 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.
- 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.
- Do not take this drug if you have a very bad infection, low oxygen, or a lot of fluid loss (dehydration).

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 have a mitochondrial disease like MELAS syndrome (mitochondrial

encephalomyopathy with lactic acidosis and stroke-like episodes) or MIDD (maternally inherited diabetes and deafness).

- 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.

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.
- Have your blood work and other lab tests checked as you have been told by your doctor.
- Check your blood sugar as you have been told by your doctor.
- Do not drive if your blood sugar has been low. There is a greater chance of you having a crash.
- 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.
- 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 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.
- Follow the diet and exercise plan that your doctor told you about.
- You may see something that looks like the tablet in your stool. This is normal and not a cause for concern. If you have questions, talk with your doctor.
- A severe and sometimes deadly pancreas problem (pancreatitis) has happened with other drugs like this one.
- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- 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.
- Signs of a pancreas problem (pancreatitis) like very bad stomach pain, very bad back pain, or very bad upset stomach or throwing up.
- Signs of a urinary tract infection (UTI) like blood in the urine, burning or pain when passing urine, feeling the need to pass urine often or right away, fever, lower stomach pain, or pelvic pain.
- 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.

- Heart failure has happened in people taking this drug. Tell your doctor if you have ever had heart failure or kidney problems. Call your doctor right away if you feel very tired or you have shortness of breath, a big weight gain, or swelling in the arms or legs.
- 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).
- Drugs like this one may cause joint pain that can be very bad and disabling. Call your doctor right away if you have very bad joint pain or any joint pain that does not go away.
- A skin reaction called bullous pemphigoid has happened with drugs like this one. Sometimes, people have had to go to the hospital. Call your doctor right away if you have blisters or if your skin starts to break down.

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:

- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Diarrhea.
- Gas.
- Feeling tired or weak.
- Headache.
- Signs of a common cold.
- Sore throat.
- Runny or stuffy nose.

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.

Tablets:

- Take with a meal.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.

Extended-release tablets:

- Take with the evening meal.
- Swallow whole. Do not chew, break, or crush.
- 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.
- Store 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.
- 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 provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options, including any risks or benefits regarding use of medications. This information does not endorse any treatments or medications as safe, effective, or approved for treating a specific patient. UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates disclaim any warranty or liability relating to this information or the use thereof. The use of this information is governed by the Terms of Use, available at https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/know/clinical-effectiveness-terms.

Last Reviewed Date

2026-08-28

Copyright

© 2026 UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates and/or licensors. All rights reserved.

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.

Saxagliptin and Metformin - Last updated on December 12, 2022
All rights owned and reserved by Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center