

Diabetes medicines

If you cannot manage your diabetes with diet and exercise, you may need medicine. Diabetes medicines can be taken by mouth or injected through the skin. All medicines for diabetes work differently. You may be on more than one medicine. Pills only work when the pancreas is making some insulin. They are only given to people with type 2 diabetes.

Oral Medications (pills)

Brand Name	Generic Name	How It Works	Side Effects
Amaryl®	glimepiride	Stimulates release of insulin from pancreas	Low blood sugar; weight gain
Glucotrol®, Glucotrol XL®	glipizide		
Diabeta®, Glynase™, Micronase®	glyburide		
Starlix®	nateglinide		
Prandin®	repaglinide		
Fortamet®, Glucophage®, Glucophage® XR, Glumetza™, Riomet®	metformin	Reduces amount of sugar made by liver	Stomach or intestinal problems; may cause lactic acidosis
Precose®	acarbose	Slows digestion of carbohydrates	Stomach or intestinal problems
Glyset®	miglitol		
Actos®	pioglitazone	Helps cells use insulin better	Weight gain; liver problems; may cause heart attack
Avandia®	rosiglitazone		
Januvia™	sitagliptin	Increases release of insulin in response to a meal	Headache; upper respiratory infection; sore throat; runny or stuffy nose