

Some Important Things to Know about Metformin

Also known as Glucophage, Glumetza

What is metformin usually used for?

It is used to treat type 2 diabetes.

Why am I taking metformin?

For medical weight loss, it can help you to be more successful with your weight loss goals by affecting the levels of hormones (chemicals in the body that affect different functions such as growth, energy, moods and reproduction) that:

- Help your body to be more sensitive to insulin (a hormone that controls your glucose [blood sugar] levels). **When insulin works better, your body is better able to lower your glucose levels, making it easier for you to lose weight.**
- Increase a hormone that helps to decrease your appetite.
- Promote weight loss.

Taking metformin has other benefits as well. It can:

- Minimize weight gain due to taking medications prescribed to treat mental health conditions.
- Help your body's immune system be more effective to fight against cancer and infections, such as COVID-19.
- Be used during pregnancy to help control weight gain. **Minimizing weight gain can help you and your developing baby be healthier throughout and after your pregnancy.**

How much metformin will I be taking?

- You and your provider will work together to find the best time and dosage of metformin for you.
- Generally,
 - You will be started on 500mg, usually with a meal.
 - Your dose will be slowly increased from there.**Taking metformin before or with a meal may help to decrease your appetite.**

Everyone is different.

Common side effects

- Diarrhea
- Abdominal (stomach) cramping or discomfort
These side effects often get better with time and if the tablet is taken on a full stomach.
- Gas
- Tiredness or increased fatigue
- Foods may taste different
- Body aches
- Vitamin B12 deficiency

Tell your provider if you experience any of these side effects.

Can I continue taking metformin while pregnant?

Yes. Metformin is often used to treat gestational diabetes (high blood sugar during pregnancy).

Always talk to your OB/GYN about your ongoing use of any medication during pregnancy.

Is there anything else that I should know about being on metformin?

Please tell your providers if you plan to have a:

- Surgical procedure
- Or
- Procedure where IV contrast will be used
You should plan to stop taking your metformin 48-72 hours before your planned procedure. Check with the providers who will be doing the procedure, as they may want you stop earlier.

Your vitamin B12 levels will be followed while you are on metformin.

- If they get too low, you may need to take a vitamin B12 supplement.
You can get a supplement at your local pharmacy without a prescription.
- Blood tests will be done once a year to check your B12 levels.

For more information about metformin

Contact your **medical weight loss provider.**