

Section 3

Medications



Your team may decide that the best way to treat your type 2 diabetes is with tablets. When you are starting a new medication, it's important to ask:

- what time to take it
- when to take it - before, with or after food
- how much to take (dosage)
- how to take it - can tablets be crushed, split or swallowed whole?
- what to do if you forget to take it
- the common side effects
- what to do on sick days
- how to store the medication
- whether the medication can cause low blood glucose levels (hypoglycaemia or hypo).

Metformin

Metformin is the tablet that is most commonly given to children or teenagers with type 2 diabetes. It does not cause low blood sugars (hypos). These tablets help to lower blood glucose levels by:

- helping your own insulin work better (reduce insulin resistance)
- slowing the absorption of glucose from your gut
- reducing the amount of glucose released by your liver.



The amount of tablets you take will be explained to you by your diabetes team. It is usually started as once a day but can be increased if needed. You can take metformin with your meals or after.

When you first start taking metformin you may experience some gut related side effects including:



- nausea
- indigestion
- diarrhoea
- metallic taste in your mouth

These symptoms usually go away after 1 or 2 weeks.

You should let your diabetes team know if you are feeling any of these symptoms, they may be able to adjust your dose or give advice that may help.



Tips for taking your medication

To help remember to take your medication you could:

- set an alarm to help remind you
- place a reminder next to your blood glucose meter
- ask your mum and dad to help remind you to take your tablet.



- If you forget to take your medication, don't worry – make a note in your record book.
- **Don't double up on your medication the next time it is due.**
- **Never stop taking your medication without discussing with your diabetes team first.**



Precautions

It is important to stop taking your metformin if you are unwell with an infection or vomiting. Please contact the diabetes team if you are unsure whether to stop taking it.