

# Metformin

Metformin is an oral medication given to people with diabetes to improve insulin function. It also helps to control appetite and lower blood glucose levels by:

- Reducing the amount of glucose released by the liver.
- Slowing the absorption of glucose from the digestive tract.
- Assisting glucose to enter the cells.

Brand Names	Diabex, Diabex XR, Diaformin, Diaformin XR (and various other generic brands)
Tablet sizes	500mg or 850mg or 1000mg
Duration of Action	12 hours (standard tablet)
	24 hours (extended release tablet)
Times Given per Day	Standard tablet - 1-3 times per day (max 2500mg divided dose)
	Extended release (XR) – once daily (max 2000mg)
Directions	Take with food or after food
Possible Side Effects	Nausea/Vomiting Abdominal bloating Indigestion Diarrhoea Metallic taste in the mouth

Metformin is generally a safe drug. Side effects are less likely if the medication is started at a low dose, increased slowly and taken with or after food.

## Precautions

Do not take Metformin in the following circumstances:

- Pregnancy. Women of child-bearing age should ensure that adequate contraception is maintained.
- A history of heart, liver or kidney disease
- Major surgical procedures
- Scans using iodine
- Diarrhoea and/or vomiting.
- Consumption of alcohol.

Please contact the doctor or prescriber for further advice.



## Interactions with other medications

The action of Metformin can change if the following medications are taken: Frusemide, Nifedipine, and Cimetidine. Please inform the doctor of any current medications taken.

## Important points

- Please take all prescribed doses of Metformin.
- DO NOT change the Metformin dose without consulting with the doctor.
- Metformin MUST BE combined with a healthy diet and exercise to assist in improving overall diabetes management.



Government of **Western Australia**  
Child and Adolescent Health Service

**This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with a disability.**

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