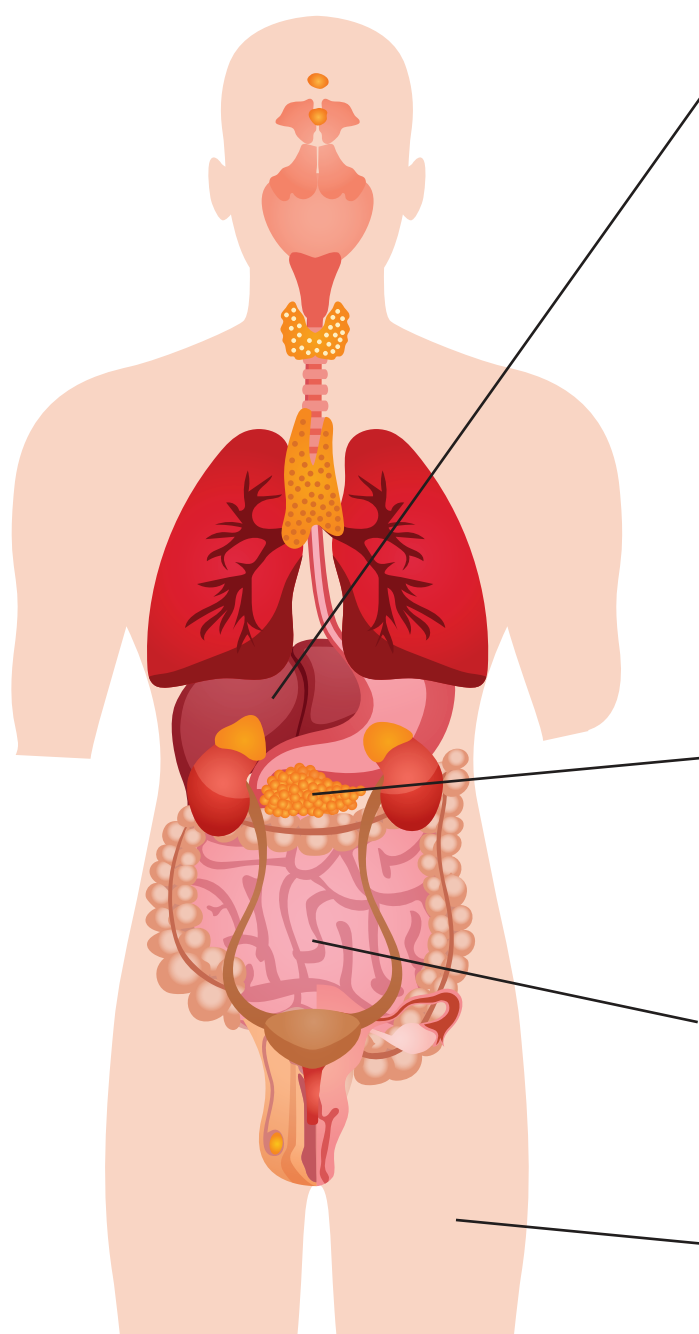


Diabetes Medications: How They Work

There are many types of diabetes medications which work in different ways to help you control your blood sugars. Learn about these medications and how they work so you are prepared to discuss your options with your diabetes care team. To lower the risk of complications, the goal for most people with diabetes is to get to an A1C test result of less than 7 percent or an estimated average glucose (eAG) result of below 150 mg/dL. Both the A1C and eAG measure your average blood sugar over the part 2-3 months.



Medication type: biguanides

Main site of action: liver

How it controls blood sugar: keeps the liver from releasing too much glucose

Names: metformin (Glucophage), metformin ER (extended release)

Medication type: insulin

Most patients will choose to add insulin to achieve or maintain their blood sugar goals. Insulin can be injected and helps the cells in the body to get the blood sugar or glucose out of the bloodstream and into the cells where it can be used to provide energy for the body.

Medication type: injectable hormones

Injectable hormones are newer drugs that may also help you control your blood sugar level

Names: pramlintide (Symlin), exenatide (Byetta)

Medication type: sulfonylureas and glinides

Main site of action: pancreas

How it controls blood sugar: helps pancreas to make more insulin

Names: glipizide (Glucotrol), glyburide (Micronase, DiaBeta), tolazamide (Tolinase), glinides: repaglinide (Prandin), nateglinide (Starlix)

Medication type: alpha-glucosidase inhibitors

Main site of action: intestines

How it controls blood sugar: slows the digestion of carbohydrates; after-meal blood sugar peaks are lower

Names: miglitol (Glyset), acarbose (Precose)

Medication type: thiazolidinediones

Main site of action: muscle cells

How it controls blood sugar: makes muscle cells more sensitive to insulin

Names: pioglitazone (Actos), rosiglitazone (Avandia)