

Metformin for diabetes

This leaflet has been written specifically about the use of this medicine in children. It may be different from the information provided by manufacturers as their information is usually aimed at adults.

If your child starts to breathe very fast and deeply and/or becomes dizzy, sleepy and confused, stop giving the metformin and take your child to hospital or call an ambulance **straight away**. They may be suffering from rare reaction to metformin called lactic acidosis.

Name of medicine: Metformin Hydrochloride

Why is it important for my child to take this medicine?

Your child has been prescribed metformin because their diabetes is not fully controlled even when eating a healthy diet. Metformin should help control your child's blood sugar levels, in combination with a healthy diet. Your child may also be giving insulin.

What is metformin available as?

Tablets: 500 mg, 850 mg

When should I give metformin?

- Metformin is usually given once or twice each day with a meal e.g. with breakfast and dinner.
- Give the metformin at about the same time each day so that this becomes part of your child's daily routine, which will help you and them remember.

How much should I give?

Your doctor will work out the right dose for your child. The dose will be shown on the medicine label.

Your doctor may suggest a low dose to start with. They may then increase the dose as your child gets used to the medicine and depending on how your child responds to it.

- It is important that you follow your doctor's instructions about how much to give.

How should I give it?

Tablets should be swallowed with a glass of water. Your child should not chew the tablet.

When should the medicine start working?

Metformin should start working straight away, although you may not see any difference in your child.

What if I forget to give it?

If you usually give it once a day in the morning:
give the missed dose when you remember during the day, as long as there is at least 12 hours before the next dose is due.

If you usually give it twice or three times a day:
give the missed dose as soon as you remember, as long as this is at least 4 hours before the next dose is due. If you remember after that time, do not give the missed dose; just give the next dose as usual.

Make sure you give the missed dose with or just after food.

- Never give a double dose of Metformin.

What if I give too much?

It is possible that your child's sugar levels may be lowered. If they are dizzy, shaky or sleepy, check their blood sugar straight away and give them a sugary drink. If you are concerned that you may have given too much contact your Diabetes team.

- If your child feels dizzy or light-headed or faints, they may have had too much metformin. Check their blood glucose and if <4 mmol/L give them a sugary drink and re-test in 10 minutes. Call the Diabetes team for advice if they do not recover after treating twice.

What should I do when my child is sick?

If your child has a serious illness, fever >38 , vomiting, dehydration or injury please stop the metformin, check blood glucose and contact your Diabetes team or GP.

Are there any possible side-effects?

Side-effects you must do something about

- If your child starts to breathe very fast and deeply and becomes dizzy, sleepy and confused, stop giving the metformin and take your child to hospital or call an ambulance **straight away**. They may be suffering from rare reaction to metformin called lactic acidosis.

Other side-effects you need to know about

- Your child may get stomach pain, feel sick, vomit or have diarrhoea when they first start taking metformin. This should wear off after a few days as your child gets used to the medicine. If there is still a problem after two weeks, or you are concerned, contact the diabetes team.
- Your child may feel less hungry and they may say things taste different. This should wear off after a few days.
- Your child may develop itchiness or a rash with small blisters. Please contact your diabetes team in case your child is allergic to metformin.

There may be other side-effects that are not listed above. If you are concerned contact your GP or Diabetes Team.

Can other medicines be given at the same time as metformin?

- You can give your child medicines that contain paracetamol or ibuprofen, unless your doctor has told you not to.
- Insulin may be safely given with metformin if prescribed by your doctor.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist before giving any other medicines to your child. This includes herbal or complimentary medicines.

Important information

- If your child is very thirsty and needing to pass urine frequently, test blood glucose and contact your diabetes team as the dose may need to be changed.
- Keep all your clinic appointment as the doctor needs to check how your child is doing.
- If your child is to have any surgery, x-rays using contrast medium, or dental surgery, tell the doctor or dentist that they are taking metformin. Contact your diabetes team as metformin may need to be stopped before the procedure.
- Make sure you always have enough medicine. Order a new prescription from your GP at least 2 weeks before you will run out.
- Alcohol may interact with metformin, please discuss with your diabetes team.

Starting on Metformin

| Date | Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner |
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