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METFORMIN

Brand names: Fortamet®,
Glucophage®, Glucophage XR®,
Glumetza®, Riomet®

What is this medication used for?

Metformin is an antidiabetic agent. It is used to control high blood sugar in treatment of Type II diabetes.

How should I take this medication?

Metformin is taken by mouth.

Metformin should be taken during the daytime and should be taken with a meal. Immediate release metformin is typically taken twice daily with breakfast and dinner. Extended release metformin is typically taken once daily with dinner.

If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and wait until your next regularly scheduled dose. Do not take extra medicine to make up for the missed dose.

Do not take any new medication (prescription or over-the-counter) without checking with your doctor or pharmacist first.

What are the side effects of this medication?

- Loss of appetite
- Heartburn
- Metallic taste in mouth
- Passing of gas
- Stomachache
- Vomiting
- Weight loss

Other side effects not listed may also occur. Check with your physician if you notice any other effects.

Contact your doctor immediately if you experience any of the following while taking this medicine:

Lack or loss of strength

Lactic acidosis (quick and severe): this includes diarrhea, fast shallow breathing, muscle pain or cramping, unusual sleepiness, tiredness or weakness.

Low blood sugar: confusion, feeling of anxiousness, behavior change similar to being drunk, blurred vision, cold sweats, excessive hunger, headache, nausea, shakiness, slurred speech

Special Instructions:

Metformin is a High Alert Medication. This means that there is a risk of significant harm if metformin is used in error.

Your blood will be tested on a periodic basis to make sure that metformin is not causing any harmful effects. Make sure these tests are completed.

Do not drink alcohol as this may cause an unsafe drop in blood sugar. Swallow the extended release tablet whole. Do not crush or chew.

Part of the tablet may appear in your stool after your body has absorbed the medicine. This is normal and nothing to worry about.

Tell your doctor if you have kidney disease or kidney problems as this may mean that you cannot take metformin or you may require a special dosage.

If you change your diet, your exercise, or both, you will need to test your blood sugar to find out if it is too low.

At some point, metformin may stop working as well, and your blood sugar will increase. You will need to contact your nurse or doctor if this happens. Do NOT increase your dose of metformin without talking with your doctor. The doctor may change you to another antidiabetic medicine if this happens.

This information is only a summary. Please contact your healthcare professional for additional information about this medication.

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