

# Metformin

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here:  
<https://library.nshealth.ca/Patients-Guides>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:  
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

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# Metformin

## Why do I need this medication?

- Metformin helps to lower high blood sugar in people with type 2 diabetes.

## Brand name:

- > Glucophage®
- > Glumetza®

My medication: \_\_\_\_\_

## How do I store this medication?

- Store your medication in a tightly closed container at room temperature away from heat, moisture, and direct light.
- **Do not** store it in the bathroom.
- Keep all medication out of the reach of children and pets.

**Call 911 or go to the nearest Emergency Department right away if you have:**

- > Severe (very bad) vomiting (throwing up)
- > Diarrhea (loose, watery poop) that lasts or gets worse

**If you have any of these less serious side effects, talk with your primary health care provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner) or pharmacist:**

- > Nausea
- > Mild diarrhea
- > Gas
- > A metal taste in your mouth

**If you have other side effects that you think are caused by this medication, tell your primary health care provider or pharmacist.**

## How do I take this medication?

- Take this medication exactly as your health care provider told you.
- Take this medication with food. This helps to prevent nausea (feeling sick to your stomach).

## What do I do if I miss a dose?

- Take the missed dose as soon as you remember.
- Skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your next dose.
- **Do not** take 2 doses at the same time.

## Medications and foods to avoid

- Talk with your health care provider or pharmacist before taking any other medications, including over-the-counter products or natural health products.
- **Do not drink too much alcohol or get intoxicated (drunk) while you are taking this medication.**

## Warnings

- If you are taking other medications for diabetes while taking metformin, you may be at risk of low blood sugar. Symptoms of low blood sugar include:
  - › Headache
  - › Blurred vision
  - › Sweating
  - › Fast heartbeat
  - › Shaking
  - › Feeling irritable
  - › Weakness
  - › Feeling very hungry
  - › Anxiety
  - › Drowsiness
  - › Feeling confused
- You are more likely to have low blood sugar if you:
  - › miss a meal.
  - › exercise for a long time.
  - › drink alcohol.
- To control your blood sugar, follow the eating plan given to you by your health care provider or the Diabetes Care Program. Remember to exercise and take this medication regularly.
- **If you are having a dye test, tell the health care provider doing your test that you are taking metformin.**