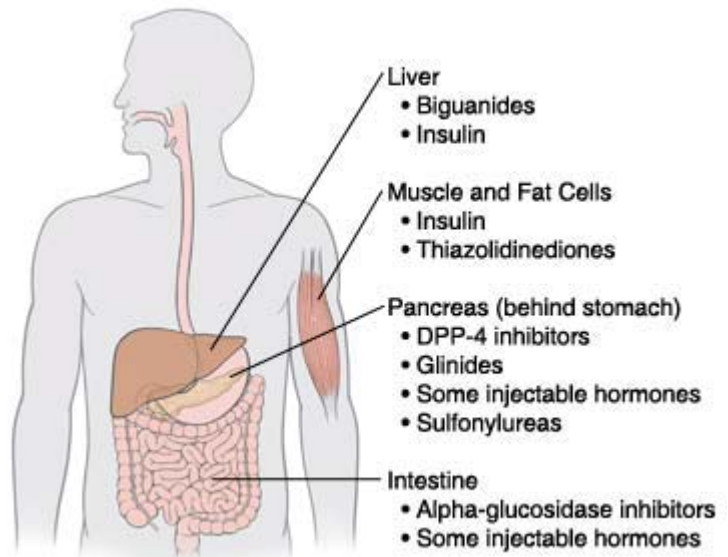


Taking Medication for Diabetes

Medications can't cure diabetes. But they can delay or prevent health complications by helping you manage your blood sugar. Taking medications every day, especially shots, may seem overwhelming. But they are powerful tools you can use to stay in control of your health.

Where the Medications Work

Diabetes medications act on different parts of the body. Many of them affect insulin production in the pancreas. Others increase insulin sensitivity in cells, or keep the liver from releasing too much glucose. And some cause carbohydrates to break down more slowly. The diagram on this sheet shows where each class of medication works in the body.



Getting Familiar with Shots

Some medications, including insulin, can't be swallowed. They are usually injected through the skin to reach the bloodstream. It's not hard to learn how to give yourself shots. You may find that they aren't as bad as you fear. And there are new devices for injecting insulin that may be available to you. Ask your healthcare provider for more information.

Sticking to Your Medication Routine

Taking your medications at the right times will give you the best control over your blood sugar. Like a meal routine, a medication routine can help keep your blood sugar steady. Keep track of medications with a pill organizer and a daily schedule. Ask your family to help you stick to a medication routine. And don't get distracted. Make it a priority.

If You Take Other Medications

Medications of all types can affect blood sugar. This includes over-the-counter medications and those prescribed for other health problems. Make sure you tell your healthcare provider about all the medications you take, including herbs and vitamins. And always remember to tell the pharmacist that you have diabetes when buying other medications.



Your diabetes educator will help you practice giving yourself shots until you feel comfortable.