

## DIABETES MEDICATIONS: ACARBOSE, MIGLITOL

### TRANSCRIPT

Alpha-glucosidase inhibitors are a class of oral medications you may be prescribed when you have type 2 diabetes. They include acarbose and miglitol. Please note that these are the generic names of these medications. You're probably more familiar with these brand names [on screen: Precose, Glyset].

Alpha-glucosidase inhibitors slow the digestion of carbohydrates from the foods you eat. To see how this medication helps keep your blood glucose in control, let's look at how diabetes affects the way your body uses the food you eat.

Most food changes to glucose, a form of sugar. Glucose enters the bloodstream causing your blood glucose level to rise. In response to this rise in glucose, the pancreas releases insulin. Insulin works like a key to open the cells and let glucose enter. The glucose is used for energy now or stored for later use.

In many people with type 2 diabetes, the pancreas does not release enough insulin to open the cells and remove glucose from your bloodstream. Your blood glucose level stays high.

When you take an alpha-glucosidase inhibitor, your body slows down the digestion of carbohydrates from the foods you eat. This slows down how fast glucose builds up in your bloodstream, giving your pancreas time to release more insulin.

Remember, insulin makes it possible for the cells to open and take in glucose. This removes it from the bloodstream, preventing your blood glucose from rising too high after meals. Because these medications mainly work at slowing digestion, they should be taken with the first bite of your meal.

When you first start taking alpha-glucosidase inhibitors, you may experience gas, diarrhea, nausea, or abdominal cramps. If you have any side effects, let your diabetes care team know about them; however, do not stop taking your diabetes medication unless you are told to do so. Side effects for these medications usually disappear after a few weeks.

These medications are some of the many options available to help you manage your diabetes. Take your medication as directed to enjoy greater control of your blood glucose and avoid the long-term complications of diabetes.