

COMBINATION DIABETES MEDICATIONS: PRANDIMET

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Some diabetes pills combine two medications in one pill. These combination medications treat more than one cause of type 2 diabetes, giving you greater control of your blood glucose.

The combination medication Prandimet helps the pancreas release insulin faster once you start eating and keeps your liver from releasing too much glucose into your bloodstream. To see how this medication works, let's look at how diabetes affects the way your body uses the food you eat.

Most of the 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.

However, between meals your body still needs glucose for energy. To keep your blood glucose from dropping too low between meals, your pancreas releases glucagon. Glucagon triggers the liver to release stored glucose to be used for energy.

In many people with type 2 diabetes, the pancreas doesn't release insulin fast enough once you start eating. At the same time, the liver releases too much stored glucose. Both cause your blood glucose level to stay high.

Prandimet helps your pancreas release insulin faster once you start eating, and also keeps your liver from releasing too much glucose into your bloodstream. Because this medication works with the food you eat it is best taken 15 to 30 minutes before each of your meals. Do not take it without food.

Some common side effects include hypoglycemia, also called low blood glucose, upper respiratory infections, headaches, diarrhea, nausea, abdominal pain and weight loss. 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.

The health of your liver and kidneys should be checked before you start taking Prandimet.

This medication can increase your risk of a serious condition called lactic acidosis. You are more likely to develop lactic acidosis if you have certain health conditions or drink large amounts of alcohol. If you drink more than two to four alcoholic drinks per week, tell your healthcare provider; a different medication may be better for you.

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You may need to temporarily stop taking this medication before having medical procedures using contrast dyes.

There may not be one single reason why your blood glucose is high, so taking a diabetes medication that combines two treatments into one pill can be beneficial to you, your blood glucose and your overall health for the future.