

Diabetes Medications: Sitagliptin, Saxagliptin, Linagliptin, and Alogliptin

When you have type 2 diabetes you may be prescribed Sitagliptin, Saxagliptin, Linagliptin, or Alogliptin.

Please note that these are the generic names of these medications. You may be more familiar with these brand names.

These medications affect the hormones released by your body when you eat.

To see how these medications help control your blood glucose, let's see what happens when you eat.

When you eat, your body breaks down most food into glucose, a form of sugar, and releases hormones that travel to your pancreas.

The glucose enters your bloodstream causing your blood glucose level to rise, and the hormones tell your pancreas to release insulin.

Insulin works like a key to open the cells and let glucose enter. Glucose is used for energy now or stored in the cells for later use.

As insulin works to move the glucose out of your bloodstream and into your body, your blood glucose level drops.

In some people with type 2 Diabetes, the hormones don't reach the pancreas, so the pancreas doesn't release enough insulin to remove the glucose from the bloodstream,

and the liver releases too much stored glucose causing your blood glucose level to rise even higher.

However, these medications help these hormones tell the pancreas to release enough insulin to open the cells and remove the glucose from your bloodstream while also keeping your liver from releasing too much glucose.

These medications also slow the digestion of nutrients from the foods you eat. This slows down how fast glucose builds up in your bloodstream giving your pancreas time to release more insulin. This also helps you feel full so you eat less.

Your diabetes care team will tell you the correct dose and time to take your medication, but it is usually taken once a day and can be taken with or without food.

Because it only works when your blood glucose is high, you do not have an increased risk of hypoglycemia or low blood glucose.

Some side effects may include: upper respiratory infection, stuffy or runny nose and sore throat, headaches, stomach discomfort and diarrhea.

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.

Taking your medication as directed can help you gain control of your blood glucose levels and help you avoid the long-term complications of diabetes.