

What is Gliclazide?

Gliclazide is a medicine used to treat people with diabetes. It is usually used in people with Type 2 Diabetes, but can be particularly helpful in people who have diabetes due to a problem with their genes (sometimes called monogenic diabetes) or diabetes due to steroid medication. Gliclazide may be given on its own or in combination with other medicines to treat Type 2 diabetes.

How does Gliclazide work?

Gliclazide works by causing your body to produce more insulin. Insulin is the hormone which moves sugar out of the blood into cells. Therefore, the insulin produced in response to Gliclazide causes your blood sugar to fall.

How is Gliclazide taken?

It is taken as a tablet once or twice per day with food. The dose of gliclazide may be altered by your doctor or nurse depending on your blood sugar levels.

Gliclazide and hypoglycaemia

Gliclazide can cause hypoglycaemia (a blood sugar less than 4mmol/L) if you have a low blood sugar (sometimes called a 'hypo') you

may feel sweaty, shaky and/or hungry. Some people also get a pounding heart (palpitations) and if untreated you can become confused and lose consciousness.

If you have a low blood sugar you should treat this by eating some fast-acting carbohydrate (such as 4 jelly babies or 5 dextrose tablets, 125ml cola or 200ml fruit juice).

Hypoglycaemia is more common in people taking Gliclazide when they miss a meal, exercise strenuously or drink alcohol. If you are having frequent episodes it is important to let your doctor or nurse know, as your dose may need changed.

Other side effects of Gliclazide

Gliclazide is generally tolerated well and does not cause many side effects. A full list of possible side effects is provided in the 'patient leaflet', which is found in all tablet boxes.

Some people taking Gliclazide experience nausea, diarrhoea or constipation. Gliclazide may also cause weight gain.

Rarer side effects of Gliclazide can include damage to the liver, which causes yellowing of the skin, or low numbers of blood cells making you more likely to bleed or get infections. It is important that if you experience any of these

rare side effects you contact your doctor or nurse.

Gliclazide and driving

If you hold a Group 2 licence (lorries and buses), you must tell the DVLA if you are prescribed Gliclazide. You must measure your blood sugar every 2 hours during periods of driving and must not drive if your blood glucose is less than 4 mmol/L. Even though you feel back to normal, you must not drive for 40 minutes after you have treated the 'hypo' and returned your blood sugar level above 4 mmol/L. This is very important because your concentration and speed of reaction are less good in the immediate period after a 'hypo'. You will have your licence regularly reviewed by the DVLA.

If you are a Group 1 licence holder (cars and motorcycles), you do not need to inform the DVLA if you are prescribed Gliclazide. However, you should not drive if you feel 'hypo' and must wait 40 minutes after treating a 'hypo' before driving. It is not essential for Group 1 licence holders to monitor blood glucose before driving, but it is considered good practice to do so. You must monitor your blood glucose regularly if you do not have good warning symptoms of 'hypos'.

Who should not take Gliclazide?

Gliclazide should not be used in people who have Type 1 diabetes, or people who have severe kidney or liver disease. Gliclazide should not be taken by women who are pregnant or breastfeeding. It must also not be taken if you are taking an anti-fungal medication called Miconazole. Gliclazide should not be given to people who have a rare condition called porphyria.

Getting the most from your treatment

Continue to take gliclazide regularly unless your doctor or nurse tells you otherwise. It is important that you keep your regular clinic appointments. If you have been advised by your doctor about changes to your diet, stopping smoking or taking regular exercise, it is important that you to follow this advice.

If you have any questions or concerns about gliclazide please speak to your doctor or nurse.

Notes



**Edinburgh Centre for
Endocrinology and Diabetes**

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