Medications

The first way to treat type 2 diabetes is often meal planning, weight loss, and exercise. Often these steps are not enough to bring your ABCs to a healthy range. The next step is taking medication.

Your doctor will decide which medication is right for you.

This depends on:

- Your lifestyle
- Physical condition
- How you respond to the medicine
- Insurance coverage

Aspirin

If you are at high risk for or if you have heart disease, taking a low dose aspirin every day may help. Aspirin can also help people who have had a heart attack or stroke. Ask your doctor whether you should take aspirin.

Blood pressure medications

Not everyone takes the same blood pressure medicine. Many people take two or more medications. The ones you take will depend on your blood pressure numbers and other factors.

Some medications include more than one drug and might have a different name. Talk to your doctor about what medication or medications would work for you.

COMMON BLOOD PRESSURE MEDICATIONS

DRUG CLASS	GENERIC NAME	BRAND NAME
ACE Inhibitors Lower blood pressure by keeping your blood vessels relaxed. ACE inhibitors prevent a hormone from forming in your body and narrowing your blood vessels. They also help protect your kidneys and reduce your risk of heart attack and stroke.	Benazepril	Lotensin
	Captoril	Capoten
	Enalapril/Enalaprilat	Vasotec
	Fosinopril	Monopril
	Lisinopril	Prinivil, Zestril
	Moexipril	Univasc
	Perindopril	Aceon
	Quinapril	Accupril
	Ramipril	Altace
	Trandolapril	Mavik
ARBs Keep the blood vessels open and relaxed to help lower blood pressure. Like ACE inhibitors, ARBs also protect your kidneys.	Candesartan	Atacand
	Eprosartan	Teveten
	Irbesartan	Avapro
	Losartan	Cozaar
	Olmesartan	Benicar
	Valsartan	Diovan
	Telmisartan	Micardis
Beta Blockers Help lower blood pressure and relax your heart by allowing it to beat slower and with less force. Beta blockers help prevent heart attack and stroke.	Acebutolol	Sectral
	Atenolol	Tenormin
	Betaxolol	
	Bisoprolol	Zebeta
	Carvedilol	Coreg
	Labetalol	Trandate
	Metoprolol	Lopressor/Toprol XL
	Nadolol	Corgard
	Nebivolol	Bystolic
	Penbutolol	Levatol
	Pindolol	
	Propranolol	Inderal/Inderal LA
	Timolol	
Calcium Channel Blockers Help the blood vessels relax by keeping calcium out of your blood vessels and heart.	Amlodipine	Norvasc
	Clevidipine	Cleviprex
	Diltiazem	Cardizem/Dilacor XR/Tiazac
	Felodipine	Plendil
	Isradipine	DynaCirc CR
	Nicardipine	Cardene
	Nifedipine	Adalat CC/Procardia
	Nimodipine	
	Nisoldipine	Sular
	Verapamil	Calan/Covera HS/Isoptin/Verelan
Diuretics Help rid your body of extra water and sodium through urine. Sometimes called "water pills."	Chlorothiazide	Diuril
	Chlorthalidone	Thalitone
	Furosemide	Lasix
	Hydrochlorothiazide	Microzide/Oretic
	Hydroflumethiazide	Saluron
	Indapamide	
	Methyclothiazide	Enduron
	Metolazone	Zaroxolyn
	Spironolactone	Aldactazide/Aldactone
	Torsemide	Demadex

Medications (continued)

Cholesterol medications

Most adults with diabetes who are 40 years or older should be taking a statin.

There are other medicines that improve cholesterol. Ask your doctor about whether you should take a statin or other drug to lower your risk for heart attack or stroke.

CHOLESTEROL MEDICATIONS		
DRUG CLASS	**GENERIC NAME**	**BRAND NAME**
Statins Help lower LDL levels and reduce your risk for heart attack or stroke.	Atorvastatin	Lipitor
	Fluvastatin	Lescol
	Lovastatin	Mevacor
	Lovastatin extended-release	Altoprev
	Pitavastatin	Livalo
	Pravastatin	Pravachol
	Rosuvastatin	Crestor
	Simvastatin	Zocor
	Lovastatin/niacin extended-release	Advicor
	Simvastatin/niacin extended-release	Simcor
	Simvastatin/ezetimibe	Vytorin

Diabetes oral medications

There are different types, or classes, of drugs that work in different ways to lower blood glucose.

Oral Combination Therapy

Because the drugs listed on the right act in different ways to lower blood glucose levels, they may be used together. For example, a biguanide and a sulfonylurea may be used together. Many combinations are prescribed together as a single pill for convenience.

*Cost is based on the lowest-price drug in its class.

DIABETES ORAL MEDICATIONS			
DRUG CLASS	**GENERIC NAME**	**BRAND NAME**	**COST***
Biguanides Decrease amount of glucose produced by the liver.	Metformin	Glucophage	Low
Sulfonylureas Help beta cells in pancreas release more insulin.	Chlorpropamide	Diabinese	Low
	Glimepiride	Amaryl	
	Glipizide	Glucotrol/Glucotrol XL	
	Glyburide/Glibenclamide	Micronase/Glynase/Diabeta	
Meglitinides Help beta cells in pancreas release more insulin.	Nateglinide	Starlix	Moderate
	Repaglinide	Prandin	
TZDs Help insulin work better in muscle and fat. Lower glucose production in liver.	Pioglitazone	Actos	Low
	Rosiglitazone	Avandia	
Alpha-Glucosidase Inhibitors Block the breakdown of starches, such as potatoes and pasta in intestine.	Acarbose	Precose	Moderate
	Meglitol	Glyset	
DPP-4 Inhibitors Prevent breakdown of GLP-1, a compound in the body that lowers blood glucose levels.	Alogliptin	Nesina	High
	Linagliptin	Tradjenta	
	Saxagliptin	Onglyza	
	Sitagliptin	Januvia	
Bile Acid Sequestrants Lower cholesterol and blood glucose levels.	Colesevelam	Welchol	High
Dopamine-2 Agonists Help lower blood glucose levels after a meal.	Bromocriptine (quick release)	Cycloset, Parlodel	High
SGLT2 Inhibitors Blocks glucose from being reabsorbed in the kidney.	Canagliflozin	Invokana	High
	Dapagliflozin	Farxiga	
	Empagliflozin	Jardiance	

Medications (continued)

Insulin

There are different types of insulin that vary in how quickly they lower blood glucose levels. Some work very quickly and are taken with meals. Others are long-acting and are used just once or twice a day.

*Costs for insulin vary due to types and doses.

INSULIN		
INSULIN TYPE*	**GENERIC NAME**	**BRAND NAME**
Rapid-Acting Onset: about 15 minutes Peak: about 1 or 2 hours after injection Duration: last between 2-4 hours	Aspart	NovoLog
	Glulisine	Apidra
	Lispro	Humalog
Regular- or Short-Acting Onset: about 30 minutes Peak: about 2 to 3 hours after injection Duration: last between 3-6 hours	Human Regular	Humulin R/Novolin R
Intermediate-Acting Onset: about 2 to 4 hours after injection Peak: 4 to 12 hours later Duration: it is effective for about 12 to 18 hours	Human NPH	Humulin N/Novolin N
Long-Acting or Basal Insulin Analogs Onset: between 2 and 4 hours Peak: continuous, "peakless" action that acts the way your body normally releases insulin Duration: last up to 24 hours	Degludec	Tresiba
	Detemir	Levemir
	Glargine	Lantus
Ultra Long-Acting Onset: 6 hours Peak: No peak Duration: 36 hours	Glargine U-300	Toujeo
Inhaled Insulin Onset: Within 12 to 15 minutes Peak: 30 minutes Duration: Out of your system in 180 minutes Note: Must be used with injectable long-acting insulin in patients with type 1 diabetes and in type 2 diabetes patients who use long-acting insulin.	Technosphere insulin-inhalation system	Afrezza

Other injected medications

In addition to pills and insulin, some medications for controlling your blood glucose are injected.

OTHER INJECTED MEDICATIONS			
DRUG CLASS	**GENERIC NAME**	**BRAND NAME**	**COST***
Amylin Slows food moving through the stomach.	Pramlintide	Symlin	High
GLP-1 Receptor Agonists Helps release insulin when blood glucose is high and lower the amount of glucose produced by the liver.	Albiglutide	Eperzan/Tanzeum	High
	Dulaglutide	Trulicity	
	Exenatide	Byetta	
	Exenatide Extended Release	Bydureon	
	Liraglutide	Victoza	

What if my blood glucose stays too high?

If your blood glucose levels remain too high, your medication may need to be adjusted. Do not adjust your medication on your own. Talk to your doctor about possible changes.

Diabetes and pregnancy

If you're pregnant, talk with your health care provider about what medications are right for you.

Important note:

The generic names and brand names are shown to help you know what you take. The American Diabetes Association does not recommend or endorse any specific medication.

You might take a medication that is not on this list. Your healthcare team is your best source of information. Talk to them about all the medications you take. Never stop taking a medication or change your dose without talking with your doctor.