

Do these medicines have any side effects?

Keep in mind: All medicines, regardless of their safety or effectiveness, have the potential to produce side effects. However, not everyone who takes a medication will encounter them. Your likelihood of experiencing side effects depends on your age, weight, gender, health conditions, and the type of medication you're taking and the amount.⁴

Medicine name	Common side effects
Biguanides	Upset stomach and lactic acidosis (rarely) ⁵
Sulfonylurea	Hypoglycemia, skin irritation, irritability, upset stomach and weight gain ⁵
DPP-4 inhibitors	Upset stomach, diarrhea, sore throat and stuffy nose ⁵
GLP-1 receptors	Upset stomach, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and faster heart rate ⁵
SGLT-2 inhibitors	Urinary tract infections, yeast infections and increased urination ⁵
Thiazolidinediones	Swelling and fluid retention, increased risk of heart failure for those at risk and weight gain ⁵
Insulin	Hypoglycemia and weight gain ⁵

Your healthcare provider may change your medicines over time, adjusting the dosage or switching to a different medicine. This may be due to a medicine not working effectively or a medicine causing side effects. Be sure to communicate any side effects you experience with your doctor.

Tips for remembering to take your medicine



Make it routine. Making a connection between taking your medicine and another normal, daily activity can help. Try to take your medicines before, during or after activities like eating lunch or brushing your teeth.



Keep your medicines in an easy-to-see spot. Keep your medicines in an easy-to-see spot (but away from children and pets). Consider putting them on your kitchen counter, your bedside table, or another spot where you're sure to see them at the correct times.

Use a reminder system.



- Pillboxes can easily help you keep track of whether you've taken your medications. They come in a variety of shapes and sizes and have separate compartments for each day of the week; some may even be further divided by times of day.
- A daily alarm may also be useful for alerting you that it's time to take your medicine. There are several apps that can be downloaded onto your smartphone or tablet for little to no cost. These apps have a variety of features including alarm reminders to remind you to take and/ or refill your medications, and a storage system for medication information.



Set up automatic refills at your pharmacy. This will allow your pharmacy to routinely fill your prescription each month without being prompted, and they'll notify you when it's ready to be picked up.



Try to use the same pharmacy for your refills. This helps ensure that your records are in one place and allows your pharmacist to keep better track of your medicines to prevent drug interactions.

Resources for medication cost

- **The Medicare Extra Help Program⁶** helps some people with limited resources and income receive help to pay for the costs related to a Medicare prescription drug plan. Call **800-772-1213 (TTY 711)**, go to your local social security office, or visit www.ssa.gov/medicare/prescriptionhelp.
- **The State Pharmaceutical Assistance Program (SPAP)⁸** is offered in many states to help people pay for drug plan premiums and/or other drug costs. You can find out if your state has a SPAP by visiting www.medicare.gov/plan-compare/#/pharmaceutical-assistance-program?year=2022&lang=en.
- **The Pharmaceutical Assistance Program (PAP)** is a program in which drug manufacturers may offer assistance programs for people enrolled in a Medicare drug plan. You can find out if the manufacturer of your drug offers a PAP by visiting the website listed above at www.medicare.gov.

My next step

What's your plan of action? What can you do to ensure you take your medicine daily?

What's one small goal you can set today? (Set up automatic refills at your pharmacy, buy a pillbox)

Sources

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3. "Oral & Injectable Medications for Type 2 Diabetes," American Diabetes Association, last accessed March 12, 2026, diabetes.org/healthy-living/medication-treatments/oral-medication/what-are-my-options.
4. "Finding and Learning about Side Effects (adverse reactions)," FDA, last accessed March 12, 2026, www.fda.gov/drugs/information-consumers-and-patients-drugs/finding-and-learning-about-side-effects-adverse-reactions/
5. "Diabetes treatment: Medications for type 2 diabetes," Mayo Clinic, last accessed March 12, 2026, www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/type-2-diabetes/in-depth/diabetes-treatment/art20051004.
6. "Extra Help with Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Costs," Social Security Extra Help, last accessed March 12, 2026, www.ssa.gov/benefits/medicare/prescriptionhelp.html.
7. "Find a Pharmaceutical Assistance Program for the drugs you take," Medicare.gov, last accessed March 12, 2026, www.medicare.gov/plan-compare/#!/pharmaceutical-assistanceprogram?year=2022&lang=en.

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