

Metformin Tablets 500mg or 850mg

Why Has The Doctor Given Me Metformin?

Your doctor has prescribed Metformin for Polycystic Ovary Syndrome. Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) has many symptoms which include:

- Menstrual Irregularities
- Difficulty Conceiving
- Miscarriage and other pregnancy complications
- Skin Problems
- Metabolic syndrome

The doctor will explain this condition to you and how it has caused your problems. Metformin is being used to assist with weight loss, insulin resistance and to improve menstrual regularity. It may be used to improve fertility by restoring menstrual cycles but in this situation, it is normally used with another medication to help you ovulate.

Are These Tablets Used For Any Other Medical Condition And How They Work In PCOS?

Metformin is mostly used for the treatment of diabetes. It is possible that you have a resistance to insulin which means that you are not using the insulin that you make as well as you should. There is some evidence that PCOS may be one of the effects of insulin resistance, but we still don't understand exactly how it does this. Metformin helps with this.

How And When Do I Take Metformin?

Your doctor will tell you how many Metformin tablets to take and how often. Take Metformin during or just after mealtimes with a tumbler full of water.

What Should I Do If I Forget To Take My Medicine?

Take your tablets as soon as you remember. If your next dose is nearly due, take a dose now and miss out the next dose completed, then continue as prescribed. If you miss a whole day or more, continue taking your tablets as usual when you remember. Do not take the missed doses.

How Do I Store My Medicine?

Keep out of reach of children. Never share your medicines. Return any unused medicines to your local chemist or hospital pharmacy for disposal.

What about Side Effects?

Usually, Metformin does not cause many side effects. If you do get an upset stomach or diarrhoea, do not stop taking the tablets. This discomfort will probably go away in two weeks. It helps to always take the tablets with food.

The doctor sometimes suggests starting on a lower dose and building the dose up over time to reduce this side effect.

Tell Your Doctor Or Pharmacist If You Are Worried Or Think Metformin Is Causing You Any Problems.

It is safe to drive while taking Metformin. However, if you are taking any other medicines, ask your doctor or pharmacist if this will affect your driving.

Can I Drink Alcohol?

Provided only small amounts of alcohol are taken in, there are no special problems. However, ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are unsure.

Can I Take Other Medicines Too?

Tell your doctor if you are taking any medicines, whether they are prescribed or bought in the chemist. Tell your pharmacist you are taking Metformin when you buy any medicines over the counter in the chemist or supermarket.

Pregnancy and Breastfeeding?

For some women with PCOS they are using Metformin to help them get pregnant. If you think you are pregnant, tell your doctor and do not start taking Metformin. If at any time while you are taking Metformin you think you might be pregnant tell your doctor immediately.

If you want to breast-feed while taking Metformin you should check with the doctor or pharmacist before you feed your baby breast milk.

References

International Evidence-Based Guideline for the Assessment and Management of PCOS (2023)

This leaflet can be made available in different formats on request. If you would like to make any suggestions or comments about the content of this leaflet, then please contact the Patient Experience Team on 0151 702 4353 or by email at pals@lwh.nhs.uk

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Issue Date: 01/02/2016

Reference: Gyn_2024-122-v3

Review Date: 12/04/2027

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