

Adherence to drug treatment in people with diabetes

Adherence to pharmacological treatment means complying with the way in which the physician has indicated that you should use your medications; this considering the dosage, frequency and duration. It should be noted that, depending on the type of diabetes, the treatment will depend on the type of diabetes. To maintain blood glucose (sugar) control, you must take your medications correctly, otherwise the medications may not be effective.

Treatment for type 1 and type 2 diabetes

Type 1 diabetes

Treatment for type 1 diabetes may include insulin injections or the use of an insulin pump. This will keep track of glucose levels and carbohydrate counts to determine the amount of insulin the person will need.

Type 2 diabetes

For people with type 2 diabetes, in addition to including lifestyle changes, the administration of medications, orally and/or insulin, is critical for the control of blood glucose levels.

What are some of the functions of oral diabetes medications?

- Some drugs stimulate the pancreas to release more insulin.
- Other drugs prevent the production or release of glucose from the liver.
- There are drugs that block the action of the stomach or intestinal enzymes that break down carbohydrates.
- So-called SGLT2 inhibitors prevent the kidneys from reabsorbing the filtered glucose into the urine; if this occurs, the glucose is excreted in the urine.



What should you know about the side effects of diabetes medicines?

It is important to talk to your doctor about the side effects of your medications and take them as directed. Here are some of the side effects you may experience:

- Some medications can cause hypoglycemia. It is known for low blood glucose concentration.
- Upset stomach
- Weight gain
- Talk to your doctor if symptoms such as nausea, diarrhea, itching, or rash occur.

Recommendations to promote adherence to pharmacological treatment:

- Know the name, dosage and what each of your medications are for.
- Consult with your doctor about your concerns about prescribed medications or treatment to be followed.
- Keep medicines away from heat, light and moisture.
- Follow your doctor's recommendations and the warnings on the bottle.
- Have a system to remember to use your medications, such as alarms on your phone or separate bottles for days and hours.

- Know which medications you cannot use at the same time as other medications.
- Use only one pharmacy to buy your medicines.
- Use only the dose recommended by your doctor.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you can use any over-the-counter medicines.
- Do not share your prescription medicines with others.

Key habits for managing your diabetes:

- Ask your doctor to help you set goals to reach your target blood sugar levels.
- Check your blood glucose frequently.
- Take your medication as directed, even if you feel well.
- Be physically active. Ask your doctor what is recommended for you.
- Test your other conditions such as hypertension, cholesterol, etc.
- Make healthy food choices, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat proteins. Make an appointment with a nutritionist, so they can identify and meet your needs.
- Watch your weight
- Reduce stress levels.



Aspect Social y Emocional

For recommendations, tools and resources on how you and your family can cope with the emotional and physical concerns that arise during and after your medical treatment, please visit your primary doctor or call the following hotlines:

Medical Advice Line

1-844-347-7801

TTY/TDD 1-844-347-7804

APS Health

787-641-9133

References

<https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/spanish/resources/factsheets/diabetes-and-medicine.html>

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<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/informacion-de-la-salud/diabetes/informacion-general/insulina-medicamentos-tratamientos>

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<https://www.merckmanuals.com/es-pr/hogar/f%C3%A1rmacos-o-sustancias/factores-que-influyen-en-la-respuesta-del-organismo-a-los-f%C3%A1rmacos/adherencia-al-tratamiento-farmacol%C3%B3gico>

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