

# When you may need to stop your metformin medication after a scan or X-ray

Department of Radiology

Information for Patients

Produced: May 2023

Review: May 2026

Leaflet number: 140 Version: 2

## Why have I been given this leaflet?

You have had a CT scan, MRI scan or a procedure that uses X-rays, and were given an injection of contrast liquid as part of your examination. You have been given this leaflet because you are taking metformin and your kidneys are working slower than normal.

### Metformin tablets are also called:

- |              |             |               |
|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| • Glucophage | • Orabet    | • competact-R |
| • Glucovance | • Glucamet  | • avandamet-R |
| • Duformin   | • bulamyn-R | • Eucreas-R   |

Your kidneys remove metformin from your body. The contrast liquid used in your scan or X-ray can make your kidneys work more slowly for a few days. This might be 1 or 2 days, but could be longer. This can cause a build-up of metformin in your body. A build-up of metformin can lead to too much acid in your blood (also known as lactic acidosis).

## What advice do I need to follow to prevent this?

**You must stop taking your metformin tablets after your examination or scan**, until a blood test shows your GP or ward doctor that it is safe to restart this medication. If you have any questions about stopping metformin, please contact your usual diabetes care provider.

Please contact your GP surgery to arrange a blood test (you will not need an appointment to see your GP, just an appointment for a blood test). **The blood test should not be done until at least 2 days (48 hours) after your examination or scan.**

**Health information and support is available at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit [www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk) for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals  
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact [InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)

The blood test will check if your kidneys have recovered from the contrast liquid, and are working well enough for you to start taking metformin again.

It may take a day or more for the results to come back to your GP surgery.

**If you are an inpatient on a hospital ward**, the ward doctor will arrange this blood test for you.

## When can I restart my metformin medication?

Your GP surgery will contact you when they have the results of your blood test. They will tell you if it is safe to restart your tablets. **If you haven't heard from them within a week of your blood test, please contact them for the result** (you don't need to make an appointment to see your GP).

If you are an inpatient on a hospital ward, the ward doctor will tell you when you can restart your tablets.

## What are the signs of too much acid in the blood?

The risk of getting too much acid in your blood is very low, even if your kidneys are working slower than normal. The signs of having too much acid in your blood include:

- feeling very weak, tired and uncomfortable
- muscle pains
- difficulty breathing
- stomach discomfort or pain
- feeling cold
- feeling dizzy or light-headed
- a sudden slow or irregular heartbeat

**If any of these happen and are unusual to you, please call your GP surgery straight away or call the NHS Helpline on 111.**

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔  
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل  
જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।  
Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

**If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email [equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)**