GLUCOPHAGE 500 mg, 850 mg and 1 000 mg PIL

SCHEDULING STATUS: S3

GLUCOPHAGE 500 mg tablet

GLUCOPHAGE 850 mg tablet

GLUCOPHAGE 1 000 mg tablet

Metformin hydrochloride

Sugar-free

Read all of this leaflet carefully before you start taking GLUCOPHAGE

- Keep this leaflet. You may need to read it again.
- If you have more questions, please ask your doctor, pharmacist, nurse or other health care provider.
- **Glucophage** has been prescribed for you personally and you should not share your medicine with other people. It may harm them, even if their symptoms are the same as yours.

What is in this leaflet

1. What **Glucophage** is and what it is used for
2. What you need to know before you take **Glucophage**
3. How to take **Glucophage**
4. Possible side effects
5. How to store **Glucophage**
6. Contents of the pack and other information

1. What Glucophage is and what it is used for:

Glucophage is a tablet which contains the active ingredient metformin hydrochloride and belong to a group of medicines called biguanides, used in the treatment of Type 2 (non-insulin dependent) diabetes mellitus.

Insulin is a hormone produced by the pancreas that makes your body take in glucose (sugar) from the blood. Your body uses glucose to produce energy or stores it for future use.
If you have diabetes, your pancreas does not make enough insulin or your body is not able to use properly the insulin it produces. This leads to a high level of glucose in your blood. Glucophage helps to lower your blood glucose to as normal a level as possible.

If you are an overweight adult, taking Glucophage over a long period of time also helps to lower the risk of complications associated with diabetes. Glucophage is associated with either a stable body weight or modest weight loss.

Glucophage is used to treat patients with type 2 diabetes (also called “non-insulin dependent diabetes”) when diet and exercise alone have not been enough to control your blood glucose levels. It is used particularly in overweight patients.

Adults can take Glucophage on its own or together with other medicines to treat diabetes (medicines taken by mouth or insulin).

Children 12 years and over and adolescents can take Glucophage on its own or together with insulin.

2. What you need to know before you take GLUCOPHAGE

Do not take Glucophage if

- You are hypersensitive (allergic) to metformin hydrochloride or any of the other ingredients (listed in section 6). An allergic reaction may cause a rash, itching or shortness of breath.

- You have liver problems.
- You have severely reduced kidney function
- You have uncontrolled diabetes, with, for example, severe hyperglycaemia (high blood glucose), nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, rapid weight loss, lactic acidosis or ketoacidosis.

  Ketoacidosis is a condition in which substances called “ketone bodies” accumulate in the blood and which can lead to diabetic pre-coma. Symptoms include stomach pain, fast and deep breathing, sleepiness or your breath developing an unusual, fruity smell.

- You have lost too much water from your body (dehydration) such as due to long- lasting or severe diarrhoea, or if you have vomited several times in a row. Dehydration may lead to kidney problems, which can put you at risk of lactic acidosis.
- You have a severe infection, such as an infection affecting your lung or bronchial system or your kidney. Severe infections may lead to kidney problems, which can put you at risk for lactic acidosis.
- You are treated for acute heart problems or have recently had a heart attack or have severe circulatory problems (such as shock) or have breathing difficulties. This may lead to a lack of oxygen supply to tissue which can put you at risk for lactic acidosis.
- You are a heavy drinker of alcohol.

Take special care with GLUCOPHAGE

Risk of Lactic acidosis:

Glucophage may cause lactic acidosis a very rare, but serious and life-threatening complication that can occur when lactic acid builds up in the blood stream faster than it can be removed.

The risk of developing lactic acidosis is also increased with uncontrolled diabetes, serious infections, prolonged fasting or alcohol intake, dehydration, liver problems and any medical

conditions in which a part of the body has a reduced supply of oxygen (such as acute severe heart disease).

If any of the above apply to you, talk to your doctor for further information.

Stop taking Glucophage for a short time if you have a condition that may be associated with dehydration (significant loss of body fluids) such as severe vomiting, diarrhoea, fever, exposure to heat or if you drink less fluid than normal.

Stop taking Glucophage and contact your doctor or the nearest hospital immediately if you experience some of the symptoms of lactic acidosis, as this condition may lead to a coma.

Symptoms of lactic acidosis include:

- Vomiting
- Stomach ache (abdominal pain)
- Muscle cramps
- A general feeling of not being well with severe tiredness
- Difficulty in breathing
- Reduced body temperature and heartbeat

Lactic acidosis is a medical emergency and must be treated in a hospital.

Iodinated contrast medicines

Ask your doctor for advice, if: you need to have an examination such as X-ray or scan involving the injection of contrast medicines that contain iodine into your bloodstream

Surgery

If you need to have major surgery you must stop taking Glucophage during and for some time after the procedure. Your doctor will decide when you must stop and when to restart your treatment with Glucophage.

During treatment with Glucophage, your doctor will check your kidney function at least once a year or more frequently if you are elderly and/or if you have worsening kidney function.

If you are older than 75 years, treatment with Glucophage should not be started to lower the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

You should continue to follow any dietary advice that your doctor has given you and you should make sure that you eat carbohydrates regularly throughout the day.
Do not stop taking this medicine without speaking to your doctor.

Pregnancy and breastfeeding

If you are pregnant or breastfeeding your baby, please consult your doctor, pharmacist or other health care professional for advice before taking Glucophage.

The use of Glucophage during pregnancy is not advised. There is no information available concerning the safety of Glucophage during breastfeeding.

Driving and using machinery

Glucophage range therapy on its own has no effect on the ability to drive or to use machines. Care should however be taken when Glucophage range is combined with other anti-diabetic medicines such as sulphonylureas or insulin, as this may cause low blood glucose levels and might interfere with your driving ability.

Other medicines and GLUCOPHAGE

Always tell your healthcare professional if you are taking, have recently taken or might take any other medicine (this includes complementary or traditional medicines.)

If you need to have an injection of a contrast medium that contains iodine into your bloodstream, in the context of an X-ray or scan, you must stop taking Glucophage before or at the time of injection. Your doctor will decide when you must stop and when to restart your treatment with Glucophage.

You may need more frequent blood glucose and kidney function tests, or your doctor may need to adjust the dosage of Glucophage. It is especially important to mention the following:

- Medicines which increase urine production (diuretics (water tablets) such as furosemide).
- Medicines used to treat pain and inflammation (NSAID and COX-2 inhibitors, such as ibuprofen and celecoxib)
- Certain medicines for the treatment of high blood pressure (ACE inhibitors and angiotensin II receptor antagonists)
- Corticosteroids such as prednisolone, mometasone, beclomethasone (used to treat conditions, such as severe inflammation of the skin or asthma).
- Sympathomimetic medicines including epinephrine and dopamine used to treat heart attacks and low blood pressure. Epinephrine is also included in some dental anaesthetics.
- Medicines that may change the amount of Glucophage in your blood, especially if you have reduced kidney function (such as verapamil, rifampicin, cimetidine, dolutegravir, ranolazine, trimethoprim, vandetanib, isavuconazole, crizotinib, olaparib).

Avoid excessive alcohol intake while taking Glucophage since this may increase the risk of lactic acidosis.

3. How to take GLUCOPHAGE

Your individual dose will be decided by your doctor after laboratory tests and examinations. Always take this medicine as the doctor has instructed you. You should check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are unsure.

Children and adolescents

Glucophage can be used in children 12 years of age and adolescents.

The usual starting dose is 500 mg or 850 mg Glucophage once a day, during or after meals. After 10 to 15 days the dose should be adjusted on the basis of blood glucose measurements. A slow increase of dose may improve gastrointestinal tolerability.

The maximum recommended dose of metformin is 2 000 mg daily, taken as 2 or 3 divided doses.

Adults

Initially, one 500 mg tablet three times a day, or one 850 mg or 1 000 mg tablet twice a day, with or after food.

After 10 to 15 days the dose should be adjusted according to blood glucose measurements. A slow increase in dose may improve gastro-intestinal tolerability. Good diabetic control may be achieved within a few days, but it is not unusual for the full effect to be delayed for up to two weeks. If control is not complete a cautious increase in dosage to a maximum of 2 550 mg daily is justified. Once control has been obtained it may be possible to reduce the dosage of Glucophage.

How to take GLUCOPHAGE

Take Glucophage with or after a meal. This will avoid you having side effects affecting your digestion.

Do not crush or chew the tablets. Swallow each tablet with a glass of water.

- If you take one dose a day, take it in the morning (breakfast)
- If you take two divided doses a day, take them in the morning (breakfast) and evening (dinner)

- If you take three divided doses a day, take them in the morning (breakfast), at noon (lunch) and in the evening (dinner).

If you forget to take GLUCOPHAGE

Do not take a double dose to make up for the forgotten individual doses. Take the next dose at the usual time.

IF YOU TAKE MORE GLUCOPHAGE THAN YOU SHOULD

If you have taken more Glucophage than you should have, you may experience lactic acidosis. Symptoms of lactic acidosis are non-specific such as vomiting, bellyache (abdominal pain) with muscle cramps, a general feeling of not being well with severe tiredness, and difficulty in breathing. Further symptoms are reduced body temperature and heartbeat. If you experience some of these symptoms, you should seek medical attention immediately, as lactic acidosis may lead to coma.

In the event of over-dosage, consult your doctor or pharmacist. If neither is available, contact the nearest hospital or poison control centre.

Your doctor will tell you how long your treatment with Glucophage will last. Do not stop treatment early without consulting your doctor or pharmacist. If you have the impression that the effect of Glucophage is too strong or too weak, tell your doctor or pharmacist.

4. Possible side effects

Glucophage can have side effects.

The following side effects occur less frequently:

Decrease of vitamin B_{12} absorption with decrease of serum levels during long-term use of Glucophage consideration of this decrease in absorption is recommended if you present with megaloblastic anaemia (a deficiency of folic acid or Vit. B_{12}).

Lactic acidosis (A condition where lactic acid build up in the bloodstream faster than it can be removed) (See Take Special Care).

Skin reactions such as erythema, a type of hypersensitivity reaction with fever, itching and skin lesions, pruritus (itching) and urticaria (hives or rash of the skin).

The following side effects occur frequently:

Taste disturbance.

The following side effects occur very frequently:

Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal pain and loss of appetite. These side-effects occur most frequently during initiation of therapy and resolve spontaneously in most cases. A slow increase of the dose may also improve gastro-intestinal tolerability.

Less frequent: When liver function is tested by your doctor your liver function test may be abnormal or you might experience hepatitis (swelling of the liver), resolving on Glucophage discontinuation.

Not all side-effects reported for Glucophage are included in this leaflet. Should your general health worsen or if you experience any untoward effects while taking, please consult your doctor, pharmacist or other healthcare professional for advice.

If you notice any side effects not mentioned in this leaflet, please inform your doctor or pharmacist.

Reporting of side effects

If you get side effects, talk to your doctor or pharmacist. You can also report side effects to SAHPRA via the “6.04 Adverse Drug Reaction Reporting Form”, found online under SAHPRA’s publication: http://www.sahpra.org.za/Publications/Index/8. By reporting side effects, you can help provide more information on the safety of Glucophage.

5. How to store GLUCOPHAGE

Store all medicines out of reach of children.

Store at or below 25 °C.

Do not remove from carton until ready for use.

Do not dispose of unused medicine in drains or sewerage systems (e.g. toilets). Return all unused medicine to your pharmacist.

6. Contents of the pack and other information

What GLUCOPHAGE contains

The active substance is Metformin hydrochloride.

Each Glucophage 500 mg tablet contains 500 mg metformin hydrochloride.

Each Glucophage 850 mg tablet contains 850 mg metformin hydrochloride.

Each Glucophage 1 000 mg tablet contains 1 000 mg metformin hydrochloride.

The inactive ingredients are povidone and magnesium stearate. In addition, Glucophage 500 and 850 mg contains hydroxypropylmethylcellulose and Glucophage 1 000 mg contains opadry clear.

What GLUCOPHAGE looks like and contents of the pack

Glucophage 500 mg: White, round, biconvex film-coated tablets.

Glucophage 850 mg: White, round, convex, film-coated tablets.

Glucophage 1 000 mg: White, oval, biconvex, bisected, film-coated tablets with “1000” embossed on one side.

Glucophage 500 mg: 90’s in transparent/colourless PVC/aluminium blisters.

Glucophage 850 mg: 60’s in transparent/colourless PVC/aluminium blisters.

Glucophage 1 000 mg: 60’s in transparent/colourless PVC/aluminium blisters.

Holder of the certificate of registration

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Glucophage 500 mg	B9316150	S2
Glucophage 850 mg	B9316155	S2
Glucophage 1000 mg	BOT0701012	S2
Namibia		
Glucophage 500 mg	14/21.2/0118	NS2
Glucophage 850 mg	14/21.2/0638	NS2
Glucophage 1000 mg	05/21.2/0368	NS2