New Diabetes Medicines Approved

Last year, a new type of medicine for treating Type 2 diabetes went on the market called canagliflozin (brand name Invokana®). This medicine blocks a substance that causes the kidney to reabsorb glucose. This then allows glucose to be removed from the body in a person’s urine.

Now the Food and Drug Administration has approved two more medicines of this type called empagliflozin (brand name Jardiance®) and dapagliflozin (Farxiga®).

Like canagliflozin, empagliflozin and dapagliflozin remove glucose from the body in the urine. These are not for people with Type 1 diabetes and have not been proven safe in children under age 18 or in pregnant or breastfeeding women. They should not be used by people with kidney or liver problems, especially older adults over age 75.

These drugs can be taken alone or with other diabetes medicines. When used alone, they will not cause low blood glucose, but if taken with another diabetes medicine that does increase risk for low blood glucose, hypoglycemia can occur. The dose of insulin or some other diabetes pill may need to be lowered if one of these new medicines is added to your treatment plan.

Empagliflozin and dapagliflozin are both pills taken once a day. Empagliflozin comes in 10 milligram and 25 milligram doses. Dapagliflozin comes in 5 milligram and 10 milligram doses. The higher doses, if tolerated, do lower the blood glucose more. Doctors will start with the lower dose, however, when first prescribing either drug.

Medicines in this group may cause dehydration if the blood glucose is high and the person goes to the bathroom often. This may drop the blood pressure and make someone feel dizzy or faint. This is more likely in people who also take diuretics or “water pills” to control their blood pressure.

The glucose in the urine does increase risk for urinary tract infections and yeast infections of the genital area. So anyone on any of these medicines needs to know the signs of these infections and how to get treatment quickly.
**Gall Stones and Diabetes**

People with Type 2 diabetes are more likely to develop gall stones. Other factors that also increase risk are –

- Being a woman
- Being over age 60
- Having high cholesterol or blood fat (triglyceride) levels
- Hispanic or Native American heritage
- Losing weight quickly on a very low calorie diet
- Taking hormones for menopause or being on birth control pills
- Eating a lot of fat or sugar
- Being inactive

Most gall stones do not cause problems or need treatment. If mild symptoms do occur, consuming less than 30% of your calories from fat, eating small, frequent meals and snacks and avoiding alcohol may help. If surgery is needed, the doctor usually uses an instrument called a laproscope that requires only small incisions to remove the gall bladder.

After surgery, some people have diarrhea while the body adjusts to not having a gall bladder. A few will have more severe symptoms like nausea, vomiting, gas, bloating, heartburn and pain in the upper right area of the abdomen.

Each person is different when it comes to handling these side effects after surgery. Some find that eating small frequent meals and snacks that are low fat for several months helps. Sometimes fiber added slowly over several weeks will cure the diarrhea. If heartburn is a problem, avoiding alcohol, chocolate, mint, citrus fruits and juices, regular and decaf coffee, onions, tomatoes, spicy foods and beverages containing carbonation or caffeine may provide relief.

**Back to Basics: New Diabetes Nutrition Education Materials**

Here are some new nutrition education materials. To use them effectively, go over them with a registered dietitian to adapt them to your needs.

1. **Choose Your Foods: Food List for Diabetes** - This is a new version of the Diabetes Exchange booklet. It no longer uses the word "Exchange" and provides carbohydrate amounts for each food. People can interchange foods among the Starch, Milk and Fruit lists. It still groups food by carbohydrate, fat and protein content. To order a single copy for $3.50 from the American Diabetes Association, go to [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org) and click on the word "Shop".

2. **Count Your Carbs: Getting Started** – This booklet introduces basic carbohydrate counting. It explains the effects of food, insulin and physical activity on blood glucose. Grams of carbohydrate are listed for many common foods. It also shows how to:
   - Estimate portions using your hands.
   - Find the carbohydrate content of food on the nutrition label.
   - Decide the right amount of food and activity based on your blood glucose results.
3. **Match Your Insulin to Your Carbs** - This booklet helps the person on multiple daily injections of insulin or on an insulin pump to learn advanced carb counting. It does not provide extensive food lists for planning meals. Instead it discusses:

- Calculating insulin doses before meals based on an insulin to carbohydrate ratio.
- Correction doses of insulin when the blood glucose is out of target.
- Combination insulin use.
- Basic treatments for low blood glucose reactions.

4. **Eating Healthy with Diabetes: An Easy Reading Guide** – This booklet offers the basics of diabetes nutrition in an easy-to-read format. Each meal or snack has simplified food lists with spaces to add favorite foods and beverages. Pictures show how to measure food or estimate portions using common household items or your hands.

To order a single copy for $4.80 of any of these last three publications, go to [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org) and click "Shop."

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**GEORGIA DIABETES SYMPOSIUM**

**Free Educational Event for Those with Diabetes**

Want to learn more about managing diabetes? If so, plan to attend the FREE half-day diabetes symposium for people with diabetes at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in Atlanta on Saturday, November 8. This symposium is being offered from 1 – 5 pm and will feature:

- exhibits from companies and organizations serving people affected by diabetes
- a cooking demonstration featuring diabetes-friendly recipes
- a presentation on how the Health Insurance Marketplace affects those with diabetes
- a demonstration on how to reduce stress

Plan to stay the whole weekend in Atlanta. The hotel is offering a special rate of $119 a night and you can enjoy other Atlanta sights and events before and after the symposium like the Georgia Aquarium, World of Coke, the College Football Hall of Fame and Centennial Olympic Park.

To register, go to the following link. **Remember, for non-health professionals the half-day symposium is free.** There is a symposium for professionals working with people with diabetes that same day as well, but that has a registration fee.

[http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e9ludivs921b63d4&llr=myns97aab](http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e9ludivs921b63d4&llr=myns97aab)
Sweet Potato Custard

One of the many pleasures of the holidays is sweet potatoes. Here is a good sweet potato recipe that is much lower in sugar and fat than most sweet potato casseroles.

6 servings

- 1 cup mashed cooked sweet potatoes
- ½ cup mashed banana (about 2)
- 1 cup evaporated non-fat milk
- 2 tablespoons packed brown sugar
- 1/3 cup low cholesterol egg substitute
- ½ teaspoon salt (optional)
- Non-stick cooking spray
- ¼ cup golden raisins
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon

Preheat oven to 300°F.

1. In medium bowl, stir together the sweet potato and banana. Blend in the milk. Add the brown sugar, egg substitute and salt if desired. Mix thoroughly.

2. Spray a 1-quart casserole dish with non-stick spray. Transfer sweet potato mixture to casserole dish.

3. Combine raisins, sugar and cinnamon. Sprinkle over top of the sweet potatoes.

4. Bake for 45 minutes or until knife inserted near center comes out clean.

Nutritional Analysis without added salt (per serving):

- Calories: 111 kcal
- Carbohydrates: 23 grams
- Protein: 5 grams
- Fat: 0 grams
- Saturated Fat: 0 grams
- Cholesterol: 1.7 milligrams
- Sodium: 88 milligrams
- Fiber: 1.5 grams

If salt added: Sodium: 282 milligrams

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Dear Friend,

*Diabetes Life Lines* is a bi-monthly publication sent to you by your local county Extension agent.

It is written by an Extension Nutrition and Health Specialist and other health professionals from the University of Georgia. This newsletter brings you the latest information on diabetes self-management, healthy recipes and news about important diabetes-related events.

If you would like more information, please contact your local county Extension Office.

Yours truly,

County Extension Agent

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