

Medication Information

Rosiglitazone

(Rosie – glit – ah – zone)

Other names for this medication

Avandia[®]

How this medication is used

Rosiglitazone is now only used to treat diabetes when other diabetes medications, taken by mouth, do not lower blood sugar enough. It lowers the amount of sugar in the blood by helping your body use your own insulin better.

Health Canada now requires that if you are taking this drug already, or starting this medication, you are asked to read and sign an informed consent. This consent says that you are aware of possible serious heart problems including:

- heart failure
- angina (chest pain)
- heart attack (myocardial infarction)
- fluid retention (with or without weight gain)

It is important to not stop your treatment with Rosiglitazone, but to talk to your doctor as soon as possible, if you have any of the heart problems described above.

When you first start taking Rosiglitazone, it may take 8 to 12 weeks for this medication to start to work.

If you are pregnant or thinking about getting pregnant, talk to your doctor about the risks and benefits before taking this medication.

How to take this medication

Take this medication exactly as directed by your doctor or diabetes care provider. This medication may be taken with or without food.

If you miss a dose:

- If you take Avandia 1 time a day and miss a dose, take 1 tablet as soon as you remember any time during the day.
- If you take Avandia 2 times a day, take 1 tablet as soon as you remember. Take the next dose at the usual time the next day. Do not try to make up the missed dose.
- If you miss a whole day of Avandia, just take your usual dose the next day. Do not try to make it up by taking extra doses.
- Never take 3 doses in 1 day to make up for a missed dose the day before.

You need to have blood tests to check your liver while taking this medication.

This medication works better when you follow a diet and exercise program.

You will need to test your blood sugar while you are taking this medication.

Check with your doctor or pharmacist before you take over-the-counter medications.

While you are taking this medication you may notice:

- muscle aches
- headache
- diarrhea
- low blood sugar

Some signs of low blood sugar are:

- dizziness
- slurred speech
- tiredness
- clammy skin
- shakiness
- mood change
- cold sweat
- headache

Check your blood sugar using a glucose meter.

When your blood sugar is below 4 mmol/L:

1. Take 15 grams of a fast acting carbohydrate right away.
Taking 15 grams of a fast acting carbohydrate will raise your blood sugar quickly. Examples of 15 grams of fast acting carbohydrates are:
 - Chew glucose or dextrose tablets – read the package to know how many total 15 grams **or**
 - Drink 175 ml or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup orange juice **or**
 - Drink 175 ml or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup regular pop
2. Wait 15 minutes and check your blood sugar again.
3. If your blood sugar is still below 4 mmol/L, treat again with 15 grams of a fast acting carbohydrate listed above.
4. Repeat these steps until your blood sugar is in your target level.
5. If your next meal or snack is more than 1 hour away, you need to eat $\frac{1}{2}$ sandwich or 6 crackers with cheese to keep your blood sugar greater than 4 mmol/L.

You can talk to your diabetes care provider or pharmacist about other fast acting carbohydrates to carry with you to prevent or treat low blood sugar.

When you are sick:

During a visit with your diabetes care provider it is important to learn how to look after yourself when you are sick. When you are sick, your blood sugar can change a lot and quickly. Follow the sick day plan you get from your diabetes care provider. Here are some general guidelines.

Blood sugars tend to go up on sick days. You need to keep taking Rosiglitazone. Test your blood sugar every 4 hours while you are feeling sick.

When you are sick (continued)

When your blood sugar is less than 4 mmol/L you need to have sugary fluids to maintain your blood sugar in your target range. Examples of sugary fluids are:

- 80 ml or 1/3 cup gingerale, apple juice or Kool-Aid®
- ½ popsicle
- 60 ml or ¼ cup Jello®

You should have sugary fluid every hour that you are awake.

Contact your doctor or diabetes care provider if you notice:

- changes in vision
- shortness of breath
- dark urine
- slow heartbeat
- nausea or vomiting
- yellow eyes or skin
- swelling of the hands, legs or feet
- rapid weight gain that you cannot explain
- unusual tiredness

Call 911 or your local emergency number if you have chest pain.
Do not drive yourself to Emergency.

You may also have an increased risk of weakened bones or bone fractures. Talk to your health care provider about bone health.

Medical alert information

When you have diabetes, you should wear or carry Medic Alert® identification.