FAIRVIEW PHARMACY — EST. 1978

# Taking glipizide safely

Glucotrol, Glucotrol XL · type 2 diabetes pill

## 3 MISTAKES TO AVOID

1. **Getting the timing wrong with meals**
   Skipping a meal can make your blood sugar drop too low.
2. **Not knowing the signs of low blood sugar**
   Take sugar right away. Not better? Get help.
3. **Alcohol, or medicines without checking**
   Avoid alcohol. Some medicines drop blood sugar too low.

## How to take it (mistake #1)

- **Regular tablets:** usually about 30 minutes before a meal.
- **Extended-release (Glucotrol XL):** once a day with breakfast or your first meal. Swallow it whole; never break, crush or chew it. An empty tablet shell in your stool is normal.
- Take it every day. Don't change your dose unless your provider tells you to. Keep checking your blood sugar the way your provider tells you.

## Check first (mistake #3)

- **Avoid alcohol.** It can raise your chance of serious side effects.
- **Fluconazole and miconazole**, and adding other diabetes medicines, can drop your blood sugar too low.
- **Colesevelam:** take glipizide at least 4 hours before it. Tell your pharmacist about every prescription, OTC medicine, vitamin and herbal product.

## Sick days

- Fever, infection, injury or surgery can throw off your blood sugar. Tell your provider right away.

**EMERGENCY: CALL 911**
**Passed out, a seizure, or can't swallow safely because of low blood sugar:** don't put food or drink in their mouth.

## Low blood sugar signs (mistake #2)

- Shakiness, sweating, a cold clammy feeling, dizziness, hunger
- A fast heartbeat, headache, blurred vision, slurred speech

**IMPORTANT**
**Eat or drink something with sugar right away.** If you don't feel better, or your sugar doesn't come up, call your provider or go to the emergency room. Older adults and people on beta blockers may not notice the signs as easily.

Tell your provider about kidney or liver problems or G6PD deficiency. **Pregnant?** Talk with your provider. Glipizide is stopped before your due date, because it can cause low blood sugar in newborns.

## Questions? Ask Dr. Mike at fairviewpharm.com/medications

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Medically reviewed by Dr. Mike Acheampong, Pharmacist, Fairview Pharmacy · October 2026

This handout is for education only and is not medical advice. Talk with your doctor or pharmacist about your medicines.
Source: FDA prescribing information for GLUCOTROL XL (DailyMed 7/2026) and glipizide tablets (rev. 9/2026). GLUCOTROL is a trademark of its owner.

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