

# EXENATIDE

**Brand names** Bydureon, Byetta  
**Used in the following combined preparations** None

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Exenatide is an injected antidiabetic drug used to treat type 2 diabetes. It is a synthetic protein that mimics the action of a natural hormone called GLP-1, which is involved in regulating blood sugar levels. The drug works by increasing secretion of insulin from the pancreas in response to high blood

sugar levels. It also slows emptying of the stomach, so smoothing out the rise in blood sugar after meals. It is used to treat patients with type 2 diabetes together with other antidiabetic drugs, as well as diet, exercise, and weight control.

## QUICK REFERENCE

**Drug group** Drug for diabetes (p.100)  
**Overdose danger rating** High  
**Dependence rating** Low  
**Prescription needed** Yes  
**Available as generic** No

## INFORMATION FOR USERS

**Your drug prescription is tailored for you. Do not alter dosage without checking with your doctor.**

### How taken/used



Injection.

### Frequency and timing of doses

2 x daily, each dose at least 6 hours apart. Take within 1 hour before a meal (do not take after a meal).

### Adult dosage range

10–20mcg daily.

### Onset of effect

Within 1 hour.

### Duration of action

8–12 hours.

### Diet advice

An individualized diabetic diet must be maintained for the drug to be fully effective.

### Storage

Store unused injection pens in the refrigerator,

protected from light. After first use, a pen may be stored at room temperature, away from heat and light, and out of reach of children.

### Missed dose

Take as soon as you remember, but only if you have not yet eaten a meal. If you have already eaten a meal, wait until your next scheduled dose.

### Stopping the drug

Do not stop the drug without consulting your doctor. Stopping the drug may lead to worsening of the underlying condition.

## OVERDOSE ACTION



Seek immediate medical advice. If you may notice signs of low blood sugar, eat or drink something sugary. Take emergency action if seizures or unconsciousness occur.

**See Drug poisoning emergency guide (p.510).**

## SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS

### Be sure to tell your doctor if:

- You have long-term kidney problems.
- You have stomach or bowel problems.
- You have a history of pancreatitis.
- You are taking other medicines.



### Pregnancy

Safety not established. Switching to insulin is safe. Discuss with your doctor.



### Breast-feeding

Safety not established. Switching to insulin is safe. Discuss with your doctor.



### Infants and children

Not prescribed.



### Over 60

No special problems.



### Driving and hazardous work

Usually no problem but be aware of warning signs of low blood sugar and avoid such activities if you have these signs.



### Alcohol

Avoid. Alcohol may upset diabetic control.

### Surgery and general anaesthetics

Notify your doctor or dentist that you have diabetes. Surgery may affect diabetic control and your diabetes treatment may need to be adjusted or, in some cases, insulin may need to be substituted.

## POSSIBLE ADVERSE EFFECTS

Gastrointestinal side effects are very common but generally improve with continued use. Exenatide may also cause symptoms of low

blood sugar, such as sweating, tremor, dizziness, and confusion. Very rarely, it may cause severe inflammation of the pancreas.

Symptom/effect	Frequency		Discuss with doctor		Stop taking drug now	Call doctor now
	Common	Rare	Only if severe	In all cases		
Nausea/vomiting/diarrhoea	●		●			
Weight loss/decreased appetite	●		●			
Dizziness/headache	●		●			
Sweating	●		●			
Severe abdominal pain		●		●	●	●
Wheezing/itchy rash		●		●	●	●
Swelling of face/lips		●		●	●	●

## INTERACTIONS

**General note** Many drugs, especially other antidiabetic drugs, may interact with exenatide to affect blood sugar levels. Some medicines also contain sugar and may upset control of diabetes. Check with your doctor or pharmacist before taking any other medicines.

**Anticoagulants (e.g. warfarin)** Exenatide may increase the anticoagulant effect of these drugs.

**Oral contraceptives and antibiotics** These should be taken at least 1 hour before exenatide to ensure adequate absorption.

## PROLONGED USE

No problems expected.

**Monitoring** Regular monitoring of your diabetes control is necessary. You may also have periodic assessment of the eyes, heart, and kidneys.