

Good to Know

Information from the American Diabetes Association for people with diabetes

Using Bydureon

What you need to know about starting this new, once-weekly medication

What is it?

Bydureon, also known as exenatide QW, is a medication that helps lower blood glucose (sugar) in type 2 diabetes. You take it by injection only once a week.

What does it do?

Bydureon has been shown to reduce blood glucose in people with type 2 diabetes. In addition, it often causes some weight loss, which can also help you manage your diabetes.

What are the side effects?

The most common side effects of Bydureon include nausea, stomach upset, constipation, or diarrhea, or irritation at the injection site. These problems are more likely to happen when you first start the medicine. Contact your health care provider if you are unable to tolerate these side effects. While Bydureon doesn't cause hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) on its own, if you are on other medications that can cause hypoglycemia, you may still get low blood sugar.

More serious and very rare side effects of Bydureon may include thyroid cancer and pancreatitis. Once you start taking Bydureon, if you develop severe stomach or stomach and back pain that does not go away, with or without vomiting, stop taking Bydureon and contact your health care provider right away. This can be a symptom of pancreatitis.

What's in the box?

Each dose of Bydureon comes in a separate packet that contains:

- one vial of 2 mg exenatide powder
- one vial connector
- one prefilled syringe of liquid
- two needles (only one is necessary, but the second is provided as a spare)

How do I use it?

Bydureon is injected once every 7 days, meaning that you will inject it on the same day of the week, every week. Choose a day that is convenient for you and that you will remember each week. Some people find it easier to remember to take a weekly medication on a weekend day.

A diabetes educator or other health care professional should have already shown you how to inject Bydureon, but here are the basic steps:

→ **Choose an injection site.** Use the abdomen, thigh, or upper arm. It's okay to use the same region every week, but do not inject into the exact same spot in any region from week to week. Make sure the injection site is clean.

→ **Mix the solution.** Open the Bydureon packet. Use the vial connector to join the vial of exenatide powder to the syringe of liquid medium. Shake the connected vial and syringe to mix the powder and liquid together. You should look for a white liquid to form, shaking hard to break up any clumps.

→ **Prepare the syringe.** Once the solution is fully mixed, disconnect the vial, attach one of the needles, and line up the plunger with the "dose line" marked on the syringe.

→ **Inject the medicine.** Inject into the skin as soon as possible, pushing the plunger all the way down.

Once you've started using Bydureon, make sure you check your blood glucose as often as your health care provider suggests. And keep following your diet and exercise regimen and taking other medications as prescribed, unless you and your provider have made changes to your diabetes management plan.

Where do I store it?

Bydureon should be kept, unopened, in the refrigerator. Do not freeze Bydureon; it must not be used if frozen. If necessary, Bydureon can be stored, unopened, outside of the refrigerator, protected from direct light, for up to 4 weeks at moderate room temperatures.