

# How to take Metformin

## (Patient handout)

**Tena koutou katoa, Kia orana, Talofa lava, Malo e lelei, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Taloha Ni, Ni Sa Bula**

**Vinaka,**

**Greetings and Welcome to National Women's**

Start by taking one tablet with your evening meal. Take the tablet  $\frac{1}{2}$  way through or at the end of the meal.

The following day, take one tablet with breakfast and one with dinner.

Over the next 3-4 days, if the blood sugar is higher than we recommend, the tablets should be increased to two tablets with breakfast and two tablets with dinner. A further tablet can be taken with lunch so that in total five tablets a day can be taken. The tablets can be increased over several days if you have no problems taking them (most women) or over a week or two if you have side effects (see below).

A few women experience a tummy upset with the tablets. This usually settles within a few days. If you have any tummy upset, the tablets need to be increased more slowly. If you have a tummy upset, stay on one or two tablets a day until you discuss this with the diabetes midwife or one of the doctors. If the tummy upset is severe (rare) you may have to stop the tablets, but most women find they can stay on the tablets at a low dose.

Some women will find the blood sugar is well controlled on a lower dose of tablets. In this situation you do not need to keep increasing the dose.

Discuss your medication increases and progress with the diabetes midwives. They will be in contact with you regularly. Remember, the tablets do not make your blood sugars levels drop too low.

The tablets should be continued until you are in established labour or, if you are having a caesarean section, when you are told to stop eating. They are not continued routinely after delivery.

During the time you are taking the tablets, if you become unwell with a vomiting illness, or have a serious infection, or you develop preeclampsia you should stop the Metformin and you may require insulin instead during that time. Also, if there is a problem with the placenta and your baby is not growing, we prefer to use insulin at that time.