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Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

April 2019

Having Trouble with Patient Adherence to Metformin? Here are a Few Tips

While metformin is an excellent first-line treatment option in type 2 diabetes management, many patients struggle to overcome the common gastrointestinal (GI) adverse effects (bloating, nausea and diarrhea) that occur during initiation.

To help decrease these effects, you may wish to consider initiating your patients on a low dose of metformin extended release (ER) (such as 500 mg ER daily) and increase by 500 mg ER per day each week until the desired dose is reached. Additionally, counsel patients to take their dose with food and that GI adverse effects are temporary, lasting only the first few weeks of therapy.

With this approach, patients are more likely to experience the beneficial effects of controlling blood glucose and lowering A1C values. Here are a few resources for more information:

- care.diabetesjournals.org/content/42/Supplement_1/S90.full-text.pdf
- medscape.com/viewarticle/845753
- pharmacist.com/article/when-patients-dont-adhere-metformin-pharmacists-can-help