

Preface

This book aims to provide an update on drugs available for the treatment of type 2 diabetes and where they fit within current treatment algorithms.

The limited efficacy and tolerability of older drugs has spurred the development of several new classes of oral and injectable glucose-lowering agents with novel modes of action. These advances reflect progress in our understanding of the pathophysiology of type 2 diabetes. Old and newer drugs are increasingly being used side-by-side.

Type 2 diabetes is a highly complex and heterogeneous disorder that demands careful consideration of the risk-to-benefit profile of glucose-lowering drugs. The need for drug treatment to be tailored to the individual patient is a recurring theme throughout the text. The potential for serious unwanted effects, notably recent safety concerns about the risk of cardiovascular events, has led to more intense scrutiny of new agents. These risks have to be balanced against hopes for more effective long-term metabolic control, improved tolerability and better clinical outcomes. The higher cost of new drugs compared with long-established options is an important additional consideration for healthcare systems with finite resources.

Readers are directed to their national clinical guidance on use of these new drugs. It should be noted that the product licenses for individual agents not infrequently differ between countries. New indications and fixed-dose combinations can be expected to appear. Safety warnings from regulatory authorities should be heeded.

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