

blood glucose tends to rise over time and in part because of diminished responsiveness to the drug. This phenomenon is known as secondary failure, to distinguish it from primary failure in which the drug is ineffective in an individual patient at the time of its initial administration. See DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION.

Lactic Acidosis: There have been numerous reports of lactic acidosis in patients receiving phenformin. Lactic acidosis is an often fatal metabolic acidosis characterized by elevated blood lactate levels, an increased lactate-to-pyruvate ratio, and decreased blood pH. Azotemia ranging from mild to severe is present in most of the reported cases of lactic acidosis. Azotemia can result from dehydration, and some patients developing lactic acidosis associated with azotemia have had normal serum creatinine levels when properly hydrated. The following specific precautions should be observed when administering phenformin: