

What are SGLT2 inhibitors?

- SGLT2 inhibitors are a class of drugs used in the treatment of diabetes.
- They are available in tablet form and usually taken once daily.
- They may be prescribed on their own or in combination with other diabetes medications including insulin.
- They help lower blood glucose level by reducing the reabsorption of glucose in the kidneys and allowing glucose to be passed out in the urine.

Who are SGLT2 inhibitors suitable for?

This medication is used for the treatment of Type 2 Diabetes. Before starting this medication tell your doctor if you have the following conditions:

- Kidney disease
- Previous history of diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA)
- Problems with recurrent urinary tract infections
- Problems with recurrent genital infections ('Thrush')
- History of peripheral vascular disease
- Alcohol dependency
- Planning or are pregnant or breastfeeding.

If you have any of the above conditions, SGLT2 inhibitor may not be suitable for you.

What are the benefits of SGLT2 inhibitors?

- Improvement in blood glucose
- Weight loss
- Lowering of blood pressure
- Lowering risks of death in people with heart disease

What are the possible side effects of SGLT2 inhibitors?

Very common ($\geq 1/10$)

An increase in the risk of hypoglycaemia when used in combination with other diabetes medication (insulin / sulfonylurea)

Common ($\geq 1/100$ to $< 1/10$)

- Developing a genital or urinary tract infections
- Passing more urine more often
- Increased thirst
- Itching / rash

Uncommon ($\geq 1/1,100$ to $< 1/100$)

- Getting low blood pressure and dehydration
- Difficulty passing urine (dysuria)

Rare ($\geq 1/10,000$ to $< 1/1,000$)

- Diabetic ketoacidosis (*rare but serious side effect*)
- Necrotising fasciitis of the perineum (Fournier's gangrene) (pain, tenderness, erythema, or swelling in the genital or perineal area, with fever or malaise).

What is diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA)?

- DKA is a rare but serious condition that can develop in people taking SGLT2 inhibitor. It requires urgent medical treatment.
- DKA usually occurs when the body does not have enough insulin, this results in the formation of ketone bodies leading to increasing levels of acid in the blood.

What are the symptoms of DKA?

- Nausea and vomiting
- Abdominal / stomach pain
- Rapid breathing
- Dehydration e.g. dizziness and excessive thirst, a sweet or metallic taste in the mouth or a different odour to urine or sweat
- Drowsiness or tiredness
- Confusion
- In some cases of DKA blood glucose levels may be in the normal range in people using SGLT2 inhibitors

If you experience any of these symptoms even if your blood glucose levels are not high, you should contact your doctor or diabetes nurse or go to the nearest hospital and tell the emergency doctor that you are taking a SGLT2 inhibitor.

See your doctor urgently:

- If you have a severe illness
- If you are very dehydrated
- If you have had significant weight loss and have poor appetite
- If there is excess alcohol use
- If you are on insulin treatment and there is a sudden reduction in insulin doses.

Stop taking your SGLT2 inhibitor in these circumstances:

- At least three days before fasting for surgery or a procedure
- If you are unable to eat or drink e.g. nausea, vomiting
- If you are unwell with an infection or illness
- If you are on a very low carbohydrate diet.

Always inform healthcare professionals that you are taking this medication.

For advice contact your GP surgery

SGLT2 inhibitors available in Europe:

Canagliflozin

- Invokana (Canagliflozin)
- Vokanamet (Canagliflozin / Metformin)

Dapagliflozin

- Ebymect (Dapagliflozin / metformin)
- Edistride (Dapagliflozin)
- Forxiga (Dapagliflozin)
- Qtern (Dapagliflozin / Saxagliptin)
- Xigduo (Dapagliflozin / Metformin)

Empagliflozin

- Jardiance (Empagliflozin)
- Synjardy (Empagliflozin / Metformin)

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Patients with Type 2 Diabetes on Sodium-Glucose Co-transporter 2 (SGLT2) Inhibitors

Information for patients with type 2 diabetes on SGLT2 inhibitors. This leaflet provides information regarding benefits, possible side effects including DKA and circumstances in which patients need to seek medical advice.

<http://www.ellergreenmc.nhs.uk>