



Patient information on SGLT2 inhibitors for diabetes

What are SGLT2 inhibitors?

- Sodium-Glucose Co-transporter-2 (SGLT2) inhibitors are a type of diabetes medication. The medicine works in the kidneys so that excess glucose comes out in your urine.
- They can be prescribed on their own or in a combination tablet for diabetes including:

Medicine name	Common brand names [®]
Dapagliflozin	Forxiga, Xigduo, Qtern
Empagliflozin	Jardiance, Jardiamet, Glyxambi

What are the benefits and side effects of taking SGLT2 inhibitors?

Benefits:

- Lower blood glucose level
- Weight loss
- Better blood pressure
- Lower risk of death in people with heart disease

Possible side effects. You might:

- Get genital or urinary tract infections
- Pass more urine more often; be thirstier
- Have nausea and constipation
- Get low blood pressure and dehydration
- Diabetic ketoacidosis (see below)

What is diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA)?

- DKA happens when the body doesn't have enough insulin and acid levels get too high in the blood.
- DKA is rare, but serious, and needs urgent medical treatment.
- It is most likely to happen at the time of surgery, severe infection or illness.

What are the symptoms of DKA?

- Symptoms of DKA include nausea and vomiting, abdominal pain, rapid breathing, and dehydration e.g. dizziness, thirst.

If you experience any of these symptoms you should:

- **Go to the nearest hospital Emergency Department.**
- **Tell the emergency doctor that you are taking this medicine**

- To reduce the chance of DKA, **stop taking your SGLT2 inhibitor:**
 - 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

- Anytime you see a doctor you need to tell them that you are taking an SGLT2 inhibitor.
- If you are unwell then ask the doctor to test your blood glucose and ketone levels.
- **Check with a doctor before you start taking your SGLT2 inhibitor again.**

For further information call the St Vincent's Hospital Diabetes Centre:

Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 4.30pm 8382 2622

After hours 8382 1111 (hospital switchboard) - ask for the diabetes doctor on call