



Understanding SGLT2 Inhibitor Therapy

SGLT2i stands for

Sodium-Glucose Co-Transporter-2 Inhibitors ('gliflozins')

These medications are used to treat chronic kidney disease, heart failure, and diabetes through protection against organ damage:



Cardiovascular

- Reduces risk of heart failure hospitalisation and cardiovascular death
- Lower blood pressure.
- Removes excess fluids (diuresis)



Kidney

- Preserves existing kidney function, prevents or slows progression to kidney failure
- This is independent of its benefits on blood sugar control



Metabolic

- Reduces blood sugar.
- Low risk of hypoglycemia (low blood sugar).
- Weight-lowering effect

SGLT2 Inhibitors and You

Why were you prescribed an SGLT2 inhibitor? (Check all that apply)

- Chronic kidney disease
- Heart failure
- Diabetes

When and how is the medication taken?

SGLT2 inhibitors are taken once daily, fixed dose, with or without food.

Benefits of SGLT2 Inhibitor Therapy



Lower chance of your kidneys failing (requiring dialysis or transplant)



Helps you meet targets for blood pressure



Lower chance or frequency of hospital admission for heart failure



Helps you meet A1c targets



Lower chance of death from heart disease



Weight-lowering effect

Potential Side Effects

Symptoms and steps to take

Side Effect	Symptoms	Steps to Take
Dehydration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased thirst• Dry lips/mouth• Flushed skin<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Headache• Dizziness/fainting• Dark yellow urine	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This may occur with increased urination. To prevent this, you will need to increase your water intake.• If you take diuretics (water pills), the dose may need to be adjusted. If you have a sudden illness causing dehydration, you should temporarily stop SGLT2i.*
Ketoacidosis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nausea• Vomiting• Abdominal pain• Confusion• Fatigue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This side effect may be triggered by a sudden illness, such as an infection or dehydration, so remember to stop SGLT2i if this occurs*.• If you feel unwell, seek medical attention to have urine or serum ketones checked, even in if your blood glucose is not elevated.• You and your doctor should decide together if SGLT2i can be restarted after you recover.
Genital infections	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Itching• Discharge• Irritation<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pain• Discomfort	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May occur due to increased sugar in the urine.• This can be prevented with good genital hygiene, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wear cotton underwear, loose fitting clothes.• Change out of wet swimsuits or damp clothing.• Keep genital area clean by rinsing with water after voiding, then wipe dry.• If yeast infection occurs, an antifungal cream or pill prescribed through your doctor.• If you have recurrent/serious yeast infections, you and your health care provider should decide together whether SGLT2i should be continued or stopped.
Low blood pressure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dizziness• Lightheadedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you notice blood pressure is lower, other blood pressure medications may need to be adjusted.

Sick Day Management

- If you are experiencing the following:
 - vomiting
 - diarrhea
 - fever
 - excessive exposure to heat and/or humidity
 - before an operation
 - ketoacidosisAND you cannot eat or drink normally,
- You may become dehydrated, which can affect your kidney function. SGLT2i should be stopped until you are able to start drinking fluids again.
- Other medications such as ACE inhibitors, angiotensin-receptor blockers, metformin, and diuretics (water pills) should also be temporarily stopped.

***Refer to the [Sick Day Protocol](#) in the Practical Points tool.**

