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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medicine name</th>
<th>Common brand names</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dapagliflozin</td>
<td>Forxiga, Xigduo, Qtern</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empagliflozin</td>
<td>Jardiance, Jardiamet, Glyxambi</td>
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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