

What are SGLT2 inhibitors?

Why is a “diabetes medicine” being used to treat decreased heart function or signs/symptoms of heart failure? “SGLT2” stands for sodium-glucose cotransporter 2. This is a specific filter protein in the kidney that helps the body keep sugar (“glucose”) in the blood instead of leaving the body in the urine. This helps prevent blood sugar levels from getting too low. Blocking (“inhibiting”) this protein helps remove sugar from the body in the urine instead of going back to the blood.

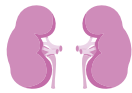
So why use this diabetes medicine? Researchers discovered that adults with decreased heart function who take this medicine have a MUCH LOWER chance of being hospitalized or dying from heart failure! Even if they don’t have diabetes.



How does this medicine help?

KIDNEY

It increases sugar and salt in the urine which increases the amount of water in the urine. Helps get rid of extra fluid or swelling caused by heart failure and helps with kidney function.



BLOOD CELLS

It improves anemia (not good for heart failure), iron, and delivery of oxygen to the body.



HEART

It helps the heart muscle work better. It also reduces oxidative stress and inflammation.



Are there side effects?

These medicines may lower blood sugar and may increase the chance of genital or urinary tract infections. Please stop taking and call your doctor if your child has signs of a genital or urinary tract infection or if your child has vomiting, is dehydrated, or is unable to eat or drink due to illness or for a medical procedure. Please notify your cardiology team prior to any scheduled procedures or surgeries. They may have you temporarily stop taking your medicines, in order to help lower the risk of a condition called “diabetic ketoacidosis”.

Does my child need to have diabetes to receive this medicine?

While children with diabetes may be prescribed this type of medicine, children with decreased kidney function, decreased heart function, and/or symptoms of heart failure without diabetes may also be prescribed this type of medicine.

Will my child need blood sugar levels checked all the time like people who take insulin? No. Your care team may check the blood sugar a few times after starting the medicine and check blood sugar on other lab checks. You won’t have to check blood sugar all the time at home like someone taking insulin.

What are some examples?

Medicines ending in “glifozin” are SGLT2 inhibitors. Some examples include:

DAPAGLIFOZIN: Farxiga®, Forxiga®

EMPAGLIFLOZIN: Jardiance®

Can my child take this medicine with other heart medicines?

Yes! This medicine may be prescribed in addition to the other heart function medicines. If your child takes a diuretic (helps the body make more urine, which gets rid of excess water and salt) the dose may be decreased as this medicine also helps get rid of extra fluid.

