



SGLT-2 Inhibitors Patient Safety Leaflet for Patients at Billerica Medical Practice

Why am I receiving this leaflet?

You have been prescribed an SGLT-2 Inhibitor (such as empagliflozin, dapagliflozin, or canagliflozin) to improve the treatment of your diabetes, chronic kidney disease or heart failure. Research has shown there are some very rare but important side effects to these drugs which you should be made aware of.

Important Safety Information

1. Sick Day Rules

If you are unwell (e.g., vomiting, diarrhoea, high fever, or severe illness), you should temporarily stop taking your SGLT-2 inhibitor to reduce the risk of serious complications. Restart once you have recovered and can eat and drink normally. Always consult your healthcare provider if you are unsure.

2. Diabetic Ketoacidosis (DKA)

Although rare, SGLT-2 inhibitors can increase the risk of DKA, a serious condition where the body produces excess ketones, making the blood acidic. You may even have DKA even if your blood sugar is not very high.

Symptoms to watch for:

Nausea or vomiting

Abdominal pain

Breathlessness or deep, rapid breathing

Extreme tiredness or confusion

Fruity-smelling breath

If you experience any of these symptoms, seek medical help immediately.

3. Fournier's Gangrene

Fournier's gangrene is a rare but serious infection of the genital and perineal area. Although extremely uncommon, it requires urgent medical attention.

Warning signs:

Redness, swelling, or tenderness in the genital area

Fever or general feeling of being unwell

Severe pain in the lower abdomen or groin

If you notice these symptoms, contact your doctor immediately or go to the hospital.

How to Take SGLT-2 Inhibitors Safely

✅ Take your medicine as prescribed ✅ Drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated ✅ Monitor for signs of DKA and infections ✅ Follow the sick day rules when unwell ✅ Speak to your doctor before stopping the medication

🚨 Seek urgent medical attention if you experience severe side effects or symptoms of DKA or Fournier's gangrene.