

# Your guide to Forxiga<sup>®</sup> (dapagliflozin) in heart failure with reduced ejection fraction (HFrEF)

Developed by AstraZeneca 

This booklet introduces you to your new medicine and helps give you a better understanding of **heart failure with a reduced ejection fraction (HFrEF)** – you'll find more details on this type of heart failure inside.

This booklet is intended for use when you have been prescribed Forxiga for heart failure with reduced ejection fraction. It is not intended to replace discussions between you and your healthcare professional. Further information about Forxiga can be found in the Patient Information Leaflet which you can find in the carton containing your medicine and should be read before you start taking Forxiga.

  
**forxiga**<sup>®</sup>  
(dapagliflozin)

## What is heart failure?

---

Heart failure is a condition where the heart can't adequately pump blood around the body. This results in the heart not being able to support the body's need for blood and oxygen.

Heart failure is a serious but treatable condition and does not mean that the heart has stopped working. It means it needs some support to help it work more effectively.

Heart failure with a reduced ejection fraction (HFrEF) is a type of heart failure whereby the heart muscle is weakened and cannot pump enough blood.

As a result of this, you may have less energy or difficulty doing daily activities due to your heart failure. The aim of treatment is to improve your quality of life, lessen your symptoms and decrease the likelihood of disease progression.

# Why have I been prescribed Forxiga?

It's likely you've been prescribed Forxiga because your current heart failure medication is not controlling your symptoms.

Forxiga may help with symptoms of heart failure, such as shortness of breath or swollen ankles, feet and legs.

## What is Forxiga?

Forxiga is a medicine for heart failure called an SGLT2 inhibitor. SGLT2 inhibitors have been used to treat diabetes for many years and have now been shown to be effective in heart failure too.

Taking Forxiga can help improve the effects of heart failure. However, it may not be the only medication you are taking for heart failure.

## How much Forxiga do I take?

- The recommended dose is one 10 mg tablet each day
- Your doctor may start you on a 5 mg dose if you have a liver problem
- Your doctor will prescribe the strength that is right for you

## How should I take Forxiga?



Swallow the tablet whole with water...



Take it once every day...



Taking your tablet at the same time each day is a good way of remembering to take it

## Remember

It is important to take your medication as prescribed by your doctor, nurse or pharmacist to help you manage your heart failure.

# Why do I need to take medication for heart failure?

---

Taking medication for heart failure can help you to manage your symptoms, reduce hospital admissions and improve your quality of life.

You may need to take a number of medicines to help you manage symptoms and decrease the likelihood of disease progression. Also, remember that each medicine has a different role to play in supporting the functioning of your heart.

Forxiga helps to manage your symptoms and has shown to be effective in reducing hospital admissions for heart failure and improving survival.

## **Remember**

It is important to continue taking your medicine, even if you start to feel better.

# You should contact your heart failure healthcare team if:



You become more breathless than usual



You have increasing or worsening of swelling in your ankles, feet or legs



You are admitted to hospital



You have sudden and sustained weight gain (for example more than 2 kg in 3 days)



You have experienced vomiting or diarrhoea for over 24 hours



Your heart failure medications are reduced or stopped

# With all treatments, benefits need to be balanced with potential side effects

Like all medicines, Forxiga can sometimes cause side effects – although not everybody gets them.

Contact your doctor or the nearest hospital straight away if you have any of the following side effects:

## **Dehydration**

Signs of dehydration include a fast heartbeat, very dry or sticky mouth, feeling very thirsty, very sleepy or tired and passing little or no urine.

## **Diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA)**

If you also have type 2 diabetes, you have an increased risk of developing DKA when you are unwell.

Stop taking Forxiga and contact your doctor or your nearest hospital straight away if you have symptoms of DKA.

Signs of DKA include: thirst, feeling and/or being sick, rapid weight loss, deep sighing breaths, stomach pain, drowsiness and sweet-smelling breath (like pear drops or acetone).

## **Low blood sugar levels in people who have type 2 diabetes**

Low blood sugar levels (hypoglycaemia) are seen in 1 in 10 patients with type 2 diabetes who are taking Forxiga with a sulphonylurea or insulin. Signs include shaking, sweating, feeling anxious, fast heart beat, feeling hungry, headache, change in vision, a change in your mood or feeling confused. Talk to your doctor about how to treat low blood sugar levels.

### Soft tissue infection

Although seen very rarely, a serious soft tissue infection of the genitals or area between the genitals and the anus can occur.

### Water infections

Although water (urinary) infections are common, severe infections are rare. Signs include: fever and/or chills, a burning sensation when urinating, pain in your back or side and blood in your urine.



**You can reduce your risk of infections by maintaining good genital hygiene**

**Other side effects with Forxiga include the following which are common (may affect 1 in 10 people):**

- Thrush
  - Around 1 in 10 women and 1 in 20 men may experience thrush. Symptoms of thrush, including itching or discomfort of the genital area, can be managed effectively with an anti-fungal cream
- Back pain
- Passing more water (urine) than usual or needing to pass water more often
- Dizziness
- Rash
- Changes in the amount of cholesterol or fats in your blood, increases in the amount of red blood cells in your blood, decreases in creatine renal clearance at the start of treatment (all shown in tests carried out by your healthcare team)

### Further information

Your Forxiga Patient Information Leaflet (in your medication box) has more information on potential side effects. If you have any questions, speak to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

#### Reporting side effects

If you get any side effects, including those not listed in this booklet, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. You can also report side effects directly via the Yellow Card Scheme at: <https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk>, or search for MHRA Yellow Card in the Google Play or Apple App Store.

# Sick day rules: managing type 2 diabetes if you become unwell and what to do with your medication

You may have both heart failure and type 2 diabetes because Forxiga can be prescribed for both. If you do have type 2 diabetes, it's important to know what to do with Forxiga when you are ill, as it is likely to affect your blood sugars.

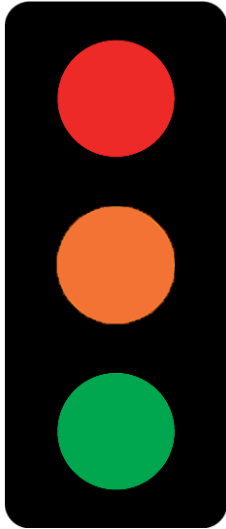
For those with type 2 diabetes, certain 'sick day rules' should be followed when you have an acute illness. If you have an acute illness, seek medical attention and let your HCP know you are on Forxiga - illnesses include:

- Fever, sweats and shaking
- Diarrhoea and vomiting (unless minor)
- Abscess
- Injury (e.g. fracture)
- Any other symptoms that interfere with normal eating or drinking
- Any illness that leads to hospital admission
- Infections
  - A common cold
  - COVID-19 infection
  - Influenza
  - Urinary tract infection
  - Chest infection
  - Pneumonia

While you are unwell it is likely that your blood glucose will increase even if you are eating less than usual. High blood glucose and dehydration can lead to serious conditions, such as diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA). If you are too unwell to eat and drink, stop taking Forxiga until recovered.

Seek advice from your doctor, nurse or pharmacist if you have any questions about managing your diabetes when you are ill.





- **Stop** Forxiga if you're unwell and not eating/drinking normally
  - If applicable, you will need to **stop** or adjust other T2D medications (metformin, sulfonylureas, GLP-1 analogues) during the period you are unwell – see appropriate patient information leaflets for guidance
- **Look out** for symptoms of high blood glucose. These include thirst, passing more urine than usual and tiredness. Seek medical advice if you have these symptoms
- **Restart** Forxiga when you are feeling better and able to eat and drink normally for 24–48 hours – when restarting, just take Forxiga as normal

#### Additional tips for when you are ill

- Stay hydrated
- Do not fast: maintain carbohydrate intake
- If applicable, never stop insulin; you may have to adjust the dose
- If you are worried about other symptoms not related to your diabetes, please seek medical advice
- Seek medical attention if you are unable to control your blood glucose (18 mmol/L) or unable to stay hydrated due to vomiting

#### How to manage fluid restriction for heart failure when you're unwell

You may have been instructed to restrict your fluid intake to manage your heart failure. Contact your doctor to understand how to manage your fluid intake when you're ill.

# Ways to help you take your medicine

Taking your medicine as prescribed by your doctor will support the proper functioning of your heart. So, if you have questions about your medicine, simply speak to your healthcare team.

## Tips for taking your medicine



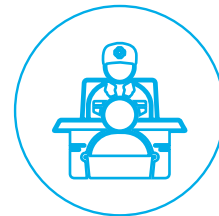
Be in charge of your medicine.  
Know what you are taking and why  
it's important to take it



Develop a routine.  
Taking your medicine at the same time  
each day helps remind you to take it



Consider setting an alarm  
or using a visual reminder,  
such as a note on your fridge



If you experience any side effects  
with Forxiga, speak to your healthcare  
team for advice on how to manage these



Continue taking your medication,  
unless advised by your healthcare  
team to stop or if you are following  
sick day rules

# Living my life with heart failure

Making certain lifestyle choices can help to prevent your condition from worsening and can also help decrease your chance of heart failure complications.

With heart failure, you can improve your outcomes by:



Following the exercise routine as directed by your healthcare team



Managing your fluid intake with your doctor or HF nurse. Your doctor or heart failure nurse may advise you to restrict your fluid intake



Managing your salt intake with your doctor or HF nurse



Monitoring sudden, unexplained and significant weight gain



Eating a balanced diet



Avoiding excessive alcohol consumption



Stopping smoking

Managing your lifestyle and medication helps you to manage your heart failure

