

# YOUR GUIDE TO FORXIGA® (DAPAGLIFLOZIN) IN HEART FAILURE

FOR PATIENTS WITH  
TYPE 2 DIABETES










Developed and fully funded by AstraZeneca.

This booklet introduces you to your new medicine and helps give you a better understanding of heart failure.

This booklet is intended for use when you have been prescribed Forxiga for heart failure. 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.

# WHAT THIS BOOKLET COVERS

---

-  WHAT IS HEART FAILURE?
-  WHAT DOES MY EJECTION FRACTION MEAN?
-  WHY HAVE I BEEN PRESCRIBED FORXIGA?
-  WHY DO I NEED TO TAKE MEDICATION FOR HEART FAILURE?
-  POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECTS
-  SICK DAY RULES: MANAGING TYPE 2 DIABETES IF YOU BECOME UNWELL AND WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR MEDICATION
-  WAYS TO HELP YOU TAKE YOUR MEDICINE
-  LIVING MY LIFE WITH HEART FAILURE
-  WHEN YOU SHOULD CONTACT YOUR HEART FAILURE HEALTHCARE TEAM

# WHAT IS HEART FAILURE?

---

Heart failure is a condition where the heart can't adequately pump blood around the body, so it can be less able than normal to fully support your body's need for blood and oxygen.

As a result of this, you may have less energy or find you have difficulty doing daily activities due to symptoms such as breathlessness. You may also notice swelling of your ankles, legs or abdomen with fluid retention.

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

The aim of treatment is to improve your quality of life, lessen your symptoms and decrease the likelihood of disease progression.

# WHAT DOES MY EJECTION FRACTION MEAN?

---

Different types of heart failure can be classified based on the results of an echocardiogram (which is an ultrasound) or MRI scan of the heart. There are several factors that can be assessed by these tests – one of them is the heart's 'ejection fraction' (EF), which is a measure of the heart muscle's pumping function.

## WHAT DOES 'EJECTION FRACTION' MEAN?

The heart's EF is the percentage of blood it pumps out with each beat.

The heart never empties 100%, and a normal EF range can vary from around 50 to 70%. An EF under 40% is classified as 'reduced'.

It is possible to have heart failure with a normal or 'preserved' EF, or with a reduced or mildly reduced EF – knowing which it is helps guide management.

### HFpEF

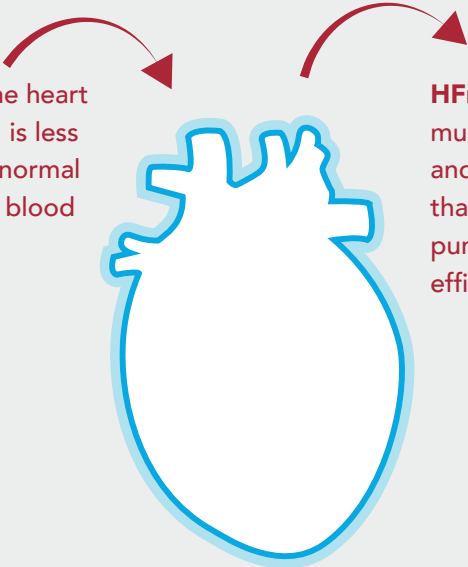
Heart failure with a normal EF is called heart failure with preserved ejection fraction (HFpEF):

- ◇ In HFpEF, although the heart's pumping function is normal (preserved), the heart muscle is stiff, and therefore the heart is less able to **fill with blood** efficiently

### HFrEF

Heart failure with an EF under 40% is called **heart failure with reduced ejection fraction** (HFrEF):

- ◇ In HFrEF, the heart's ability **to pump blood out** is reduced because the muscle in the left ventricle – the part of the heart that pumps the blood around the body – is weakened



**HFpEF:** the heart is stiff and is less able than normal to fill with blood efficiently

**HFrEF:** the heart muscle is weak and is less able than normal to pump blood out efficiently

Treatment for heart failure depends on the heart's EF – your doctor will discuss your treatment options with you.

The good news is that Forxiga can be used to treat heart failure regardless of whether the EF is preserved or reduced.

# 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, tiredness or swollen ankles, feet and legs.

## WHAT IS FORXIGA?

Forxiga is a medicine for heart failure called an SGLT2 inhibitor, which work by blocking the SGLT2 protein in your kidneys, helping excess sugar (glucose) pass out of the body in your urine.

SGLT2 inhibitors have been used for treating diabetes to help control blood sugar levels for many years. Forxiga has also been found to be effective in treating heart failure and chronic kidney disease, in people with or without type 2 diabetes.

Your doctor may have prescribed Forxiga for both your heart and your diabetes.

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 half a glass of 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 so you feel better, 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.

# 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)**

As you have type 2 diabetes, you have an increased risk of developing DKA when you are unwell. DKA is a rare but serious, sometimes life-threatening problem you can get with diabetes because of increased levels of 'ketone bodies' in your urine or blood, seen in tests.

The risk of developing DKA is increased with prolonged fasting, excessive alcohol consumption, dehydration, sudden reductions in insulin dose, or a higher need of insulin due to major surgery or serious illness.

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

The symptoms 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 or nail varnish remover).

## **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 (e.g. glicazide) 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 urinary infections (water 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 100 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

---

Forxiga can be prescribed for both heart failure and type 2 diabetes. As you 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 from your doctor, nurse or pharmacist and let them 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
  - o A common cold
  - o COVID-19 infection
  - o Influenza
  - o Urinary tract infection
  - o Chest infection
  - o 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.**



**PAUSE** Forxiga if you're unwell and not eating/drinking normally

- If applicable, you will need to stop or adjust other diabetes medications (metformin, sulfonylureas, GLP-1 analogues) during the period you are unwell – see appropriate patient information leaflets for guidance
- Other common medications that need to be temporarily stopped while you are unwell include:
  - Some blood pressure tablets, such as ACE inhibitors – these tend to end in 'pril', e.g. ramipril
  - ARBs – these tend to end in 'tan', e.g. losartan or valsartan
  - Diuretics, e.g. furosemide or bendroflumethiazide
  - MRAs, e.g. spironolactone or eplerenone
  - Heart failure medications such as Entresto



**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

- If applicable, restart other medications – see appropriate patient information leaflets for guidance on your other medicines
- Seek advice from your doctor, nurse or pharmacist if you do not feel better after 2–3 days

**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 salt intake



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**

## 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



