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Unlocking Renal Benefits: SGLT2 Inhibitors in CKD

So-Young Lee

CHA Bundang Medical Center, Republic of Korea

Sodium-glucose cotransporter 2 (SGLT2) inhibitors were initially developed as a treatment for type 2 diabetes due to their ability to inhibit sodium and glucose reabsorption in the proximal tubules, thereby lowering blood glucose levels. However, clinical trials conducted in patients with type 2 diabetes have shown that SGLT2 inhibitors not only reduce the incidence of cardiovascular events but also decrease the risk of worsening kidney disease, thereby highlighting their potential as a treatment for chronic kidney disease (CKD). Subsequently, the 2020 DAPA-CKD study and the 2023 EMPA-Kidney study demonstrated that, in patients with non-diabetic CKD, SGLT2 inhibitors significantly reduced proteinuria, cardiovascular mortality, and the risk of kidney disease progression. These findings provided evidence that SGLT2 inhibitors can extend beyond blood glucose control to become a potential treatment for chronic kidney disease. This lecture reviews clinical trials demonstrating the kidney-protective effects of SGLT2 inhibitors and the possible mechanisms underlying these benefits.

Keywords: albuminuria, cardiovascular disease, chronic kidney disease, empagliflozin, sodium glucose cotransporter 2 inhibitor