

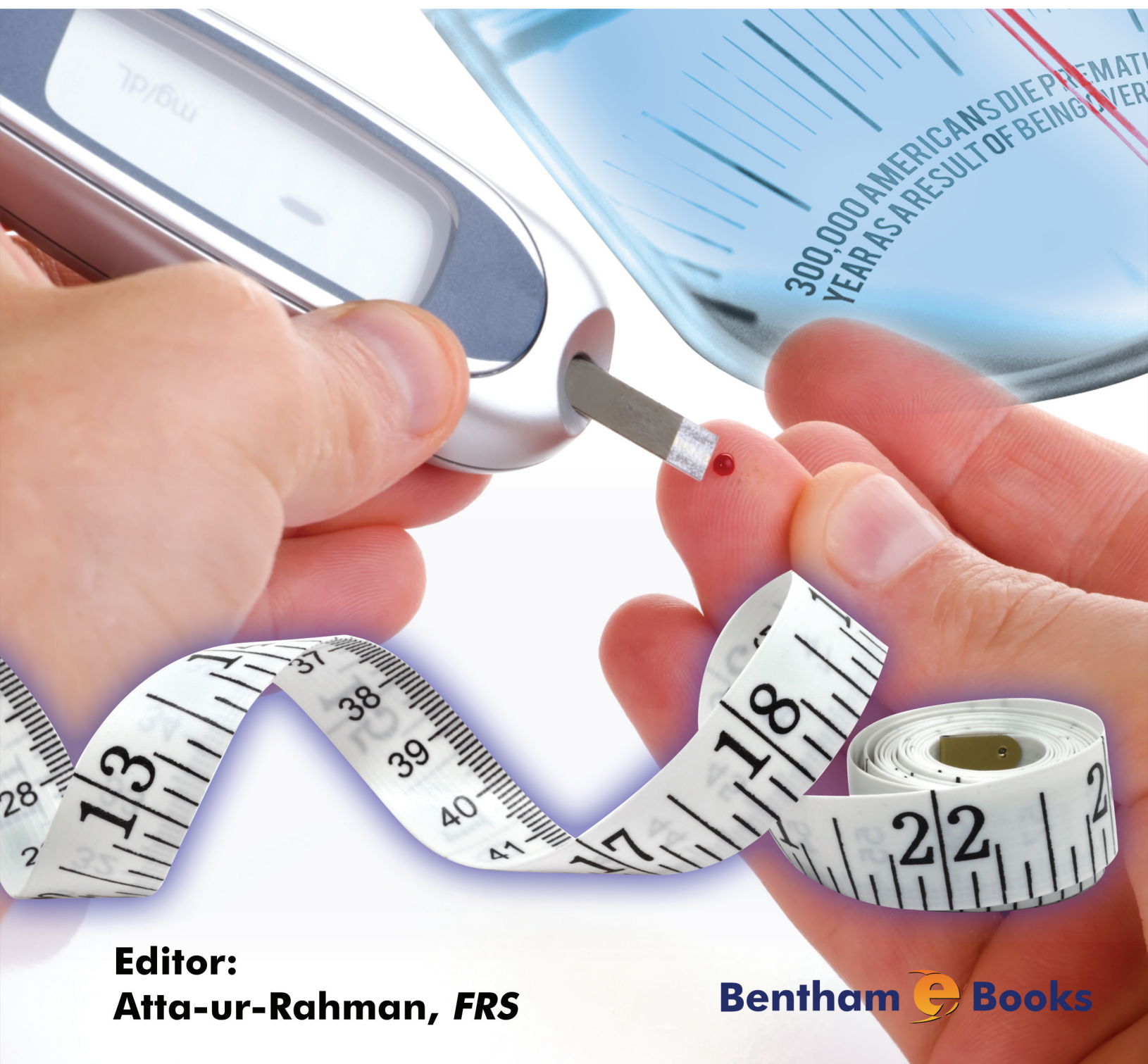
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(Diabetes and Obesity)

Volume 5



Editor:
Atta-ur-Rahman, FRS

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(Volume 5)

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CONTENTS

PREFACE	i
LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS	ii
CHAPTER 1 METABOLIC SYNDROME IN SCHIZOPHRENIA: FOCUS ON THE ROLE OF ANTIPSYCHOTIC MEDICATIONS AND INDICATIONS FOR THERAPEUTIC DRUG MONITORING (TDM) METHODS	1
<i>Roberto Mandrioli, Michele Protti cpf Laura Mercolini</i>	
INTRODUCTION	2
Metabolic Syndrome in Psychotic Patients	3
The Role of Therapeutic Drug Monitoring in Metabolic Syndrome Prevention and Treatment	3
CLASSICAL NEUROLEPTICS AND METABOLIC SYNDROME	6
Chlorpromazine	6
Haloperidol	7
Loxapine	7
ATYPICAL ANTIPSYCHOTICS AND METABOLIC SYNDROME	8
Amisulpride	8
<i>Analytical Methods Suitable for TDM</i>	9
Aripiprazole	9
<i>Comparative Studies</i>	10
<i>Switching Studies</i>	11
<i>Augmentation Strategies</i>	12
<i>Analytical Methods Suitable for TDM</i>	12
Asenapine	13
<i>Analytical Methods Suitable for TDM</i>	14
Clozapine	15
<i>Management of Metabolic Syndrome and Other Metabolic Impairments</i>	16
<i>Comparative Studies</i>	17
<i>Augmentation Strategies</i>	17
<i>Analytical Methods Suitable for TDM</i>	17
Iloperidone	18
<i>Analytical Methods Suitable for TDM</i>	18
Lurasidone	19
<i>Comparative Studies</i>	19
<i>Switching Studies</i>	20
<i>Analytical Methods Suitable for TDM</i>	20
Olanzapine	21
<i>Management of Metabolic Syndrome and Other Metabolic Impairments</i>	22
<i>Comparative Studies</i>	23
<i>Switching Studies</i>	24
<i>Augmentation Studies</i>	25
<i>Analytical Methods Suitable for TDM</i>	25
Quetiapine	25
<i>Comparative Studies</i>	26
<i>Switching Studies</i>	27
<i>Augmentation Strategies</i>	27
<i>Analytical Methods Suitable for TDM</i>	27
Risperidone	27
<i>Comparative Studies</i>	28

<i>Switching Studies</i>	29
<i>Augmentation Strategies</i>	29
<i>Analytical Methods Suitable for TDM</i>	29
Sertindole	30
<i>Analytical Methods Suitable for TDM</i>	31
Ziprasidone	31
<i>Comparative Studies</i>	32
<i>Switching Studies</i>	33
<i>Analytical Methods Suitable for TDM</i>	34
CONCLUDING REMARKS	35
CONSENT FOR PUBLICATION	35
CONFLICT OF INTEREST	35
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	35
REFERENCES	35
CHAPTER 2 INSULIN THERAPY AND FOETOPLACENTAL ENDOTHELIAL DYSFUNCTION IN GESTATIONAL DIABETES MELLITUS	66
<i>Mario Subiabre, Roberto Villalobos-Labra, Luis Silva, Fabián Pardo and Luis Sobrevia</i>	
INTRODUCTION	67
Insulin Therapy in Gestational Diabetes Mellitus	68
Protocols of Insulin Therapy	68
Insulin Therapy: Beneficial or Harmful to the Growing Foetus and Newborn?	72
Mechanisms of Foetoplacental Dysfunction in GDM Under Insulin Therapy	74
<i>The L-arginine/Nitric Oxide Signalling Pathway</i>	74
<i>Insulin Receptors and Signalling Pathways</i>	75
<i>Endoplasmic Reticulum Stress</i>	76
CONCLUDING REMARKS	77
CONSENT FOR PUBLICATION	79
CONFLICT OF INTEREST	79
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	79
REFERENCES	79
CHAPTER 3 INSIGHTS ON DIABETES, OXIDATIVE STRESS AND ANTIOXIDANT THERAPEUTIC STRATEGIES	87
<i>Nicolette Nadene Houeld and Naresh Kumar Rajendran</i>	
1. INTRODUCTION	88
2. OXIDATIVE STRESS AND FREE RADICALS	88
2.1. Free Radicals	90
2.1.1. <i>Reactive Oxygen Species (ROS)</i>	90
2.2.2. <i>Reactive Nitrogen Species (RNS)</i>	93
2.2.3. <i>ROS Interaction with Thiol Groups</i>	94
3. ANTIOXIDANT DEFENSE SYSTEMS	94
3.1. Antioxidant Mechanisms Against Free Radicals	97
3.2. Superoxide Dismutase (SOD, EC 1.15.1.1)	97
3.3. Catalase (CAT, EC 1.11.1.6)	98
3.4. Glutathione Peroxidases (GPx, EC 1.11.1.9)	98
3.5. Antioxidant Vitamins	99
3.5.1. <i>Phytochemicals</i>	100
4. OXIDATIVE STRESS AND DIABETES	100
4.1. Vascular Inflammation in Diabetes	103
4.2. Antioxidant Strategies to Control Oxidative Stress in Diabetes	104

CONCLUSION	107
CONSENT FOR PUBLICATION	108
CONFLICT OF INTEREST	108
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	108
REFERENCES	108
CHAPTER 4 ADMINISTRATION OF NANO DRUGS IN THE TREATMENT OF DIABETES MELLITUS	116
<i>Radhika Tippani, Rama Narsimha Reddy Anreddy and Mahendar Porika</i>	
INTRODUCTION TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF DRUGS BY ORAL ROUTE	116
CLINICAL FEATURES OF DIABETES	118
Pathophysiology	118
Type 1 DM	118
Type 2 DM	119
Insulin Resistance	119
COMPLICATIONS	119
Complications can be Divided into Acute and Chronic Depending on the Duration of Illness	119
DIAGNOSIS OF DIABETES MELLITUS	120
RECOMMENDED INVESTIGATIONS	120
Random Plasma Blood Sugar Test	120
Fasting Plasma Blood Sugar Test	120
Oral Glucose Tolerance Test	120
Procedure	120
INTRODUCTION TO NANOTECHNOLOGY	120
Vesicles	121
Liposomes	121
Nanocapsules	121
Nanospheres	121
Ceramic NPs	122
Dendrimers	122
Polymeric NPs	122
PLGA NPs	122
ANTI-DIABETIC MEDICATION	122
Insulin	122
Nanocarrier Based Insulin Delivery Systems	124
ORAL HYPOGLYCEMIC AGENTS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF TYPE 2 DIABETES MELLITUS	126
LIMITATIONS	132
CONCLUSION	132
CONSENT FOR PUBLICATION	133
CONFLICT OF INTEREST	133
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	133
REFERENCES	133
CHAPTER 5 SGLT-2 INHIBITORS: AN EVIDENCE-BASED PERSPECTIVE	138
<i>Siddhartha Dutta, Pramod Kumar Sharma and Arup Kumar Misra</i>	
INTRODUCTION	138
Need for New Targets	139
Glucose Handling by Kidneys	139
Role Of SGLT-2 In Kidneys	140
SGLT-2 Inhibitors- A Targeted Approach to Curb Hyperglycaemia	140
<i>History</i>	140

<i>SGLT-2 inhibitors</i>	140
<i>SGLT-2 Inhibitors in Renal Failure</i>	144
<i>Safety and Tolerability of SGLT-2 Inhibitors</i>	144
<i>Beneficial effects of SGLT-2 inhibitors Beyond Controlling Hyperglycaemia</i>	145
CONCLUSION	147
CONSENT FOR PUBLICATION	147
CONFLICT OF INTEREST	147
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	147
REFERENCES	147
SUBJECT INDEX	378

PREFACE

The fifth volume of *Frontiers in Clinical Drug Research – Diabetes and Obesity* comprises five comprehensive chapters discussing novel approaches to combat diabetes and obesity.

In the first chapter, Mandrioli *et al*, present the three most important classical neuroleptics (chlorpromazine, haloperidol and loxapine). The most important antipsychotics are individually analyzed in relation to their propensity to cause metabolic syndrome. In chapter 2 of the book, Sobrevia *et al* summarise some examples of the wide variety of protocols for insulin therapy and the potential consequences of this protocol on the foetoplacental unit and the neonate from women with Gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM).

Growing evidence suggests that hyperglycemia results in increased reactive oxygen species (ROS) production, leading to oxidative stress which affects and damages various tissues and organs. Oxidative stress results from an imbalance between ROS and antioxidants. Houreld and Rajendran highlight the understanding of oxidative stress-related mechanisms underlying the development of diabetes. Their review also elaborates on antioxidant therapy strategies to diminish oxidative stress and to treat diabetic associated complications.

Diabetes mellitus (DM) is a metabolic disorder which is the most alarming disease of the modern era. It occurs as a result of lack of insulin secretion or reduced insulin secretion or peripheral insulin resistance. In chapter 4, Anreddy *et al*. describe the issues concerned with the oral delivery of insulin and also discuss possible routes for the administration and use of Nanoparticles (NPs) for the best delivery of insulin.

In the last chapter of the book, Sharma *et al*. give comprehensive details about the merits and demerits of a class of drugs called Sodium-glucose co-transporter-2 (SGLT-2) inhibitors.

I owe special thanks to all the contributors for their valuable contributions in bringing together the fifth volume of this book series. I also thank the editorial staff of Bentham Science Publishers for their help and support.

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CHAPTER 1**Metabolic Syndrome in Schizophrenia: Focus on the Role of Antipsychotic Medications and Indications for Therapeutic Drug Monitoring (TDM) Methods****Roberto Mandrioli^{1,*}, Michele Protti² and Laura Mercolini²**¹ *Department for Life Quality Studies, Alma Mater Studiorum – University of Bologna, Rimini, Italy*² *Pharmaco-Toxicological Analysis Laboratory (PTA Lab), Department of Pharmacy and Biotechnology (FaBiT), Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna, Bologna, Italy*

Abstract: Metabolic syndrome is a complex pathology characterized by imbalances in lipid and glucose metabolism and weight gain, and consequently by an increase in the incidence of type II diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Metabolic syndrome is rapidly becoming one of the most important side effects of treatment with modern “atypical” antipsychotic agents, probably due to their specific mechanisms of action. Although the most recent members of this class (aripiprazole, asenapine, ziprasidone) seem to produce a reduce incidence of metabolic syndrome, the problem is far from being resolved. In this chapter, the three most important classical neuroleptics (chlorpromazine, haloperidol and loxapine) and the most important atypical antipsychotics will be individually analyzed in relation to their propensity to cause metabolic syndrome. The most reliable, current data will be presented, also in the perspective of possible interventions to mitigate metabolic imbalances, comparative studies, switching studies and augmentation strategies. An important strategy for metabolic syndrome prevention could also be the performing of an accurate therapeutic drug monitoring (TDM). Thus, an up-to-date overview will also be presented of recent and significant analytical methods for the determination of the drugs of interest and their main metabolites in human biological fluids.

Keywords: Antipsychotic drugs, Diabetes, Hypercholesterolemia, Hypertriglyceridemia, Metabolic syndrome (MetSyn), Obesity, Pharmacotherapy, Polypharmacy, Therapeutic Drug Monitoring (TDM).

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INTRODUCTION

Psychiatric disorders are currently one of the main causes of disability and years lost to illness all over the world: According to recent World Health Organization (WHO) statistics, almost 30% of people have experienced a common mental disorder at some time during their lifetimes [1]. Psychiatric disorders often take a heavy toll on patients' well-being also from a purely physical point of view. Since they often cannot take care of themselves optimally, comorbidity is very frequent, and naturally it increases with age. On top of all of this, one must remember that pharmacological therapy, albeit one of the most effective forms of treatment, is also in itself a potential source of iatrogenic effects. According to some studies, it is estimated that up to 74% of patients discontinue the medication before 18 months [2], and between 10 and 20% are forced to interrupt the pharmacologic treatment due to side or toxic effects [2, 3]. Two major factors contribute to exacerbate this situation: polypharmacy and lifelong chronic therapy. Psychiatric patients are often subjected to polypharmacy due to the inherent difficulty in controlling the disorder's multifaceted symptoms, and also due to the relatively low rate of success of the therapy. It is estimated that between 20 and 60% of schizophrenic patients are currently treated with two or more drugs for their illness [4]. Since schizophrenia is a very complex, articulated syndrome, different drugs are usually able to control just a part, or some aspects of the overall symptoms; hence the need for polypharmacy. Of course, this situation becomes even more complicated and worrying for elderly patients, who are usually subjected to pharmacological therapies for other severe illnesses as well as for the psychiatric disorder. Regarding the therapy duration, psychiatric disorders are eminently chronic. What is worse, current treatments are not resolute of the underlying problem, nor an etiologic agent is currently known. As a consequence, lifelong treatment with one or more drugs is relatively frequent [5]; periods of remission, followed by one or more relapses, are quite common as well [6]. Minimum therapy duration is measured in months or years, not in weeks.

Many side effects of antipsychotic drugs are well known and readily taken care of during the treatment (*e.g.*, extrapyramidal symptoms); however, a few are still kept in the background and not completely acknowledged or understood. Perhaps the most important of these latter effects is metabolic syndrome (MetSyn). MetSyn is a chronic multifactorial disease related to several conditions that have the common trait of increasing the probability of a cardiovascular event. The most important conditions involved in MetSyn are diabetes, central or visceral obesity, hypercholesterolemia, hypertriglyceridemia and hypertension. The red line that connects these conditions is a metabolism imbalance associated with an insulin resistance state and an activation of the sympathetic nervous system [7, 8]. Since cardiovascular events are the leading cause of death and disability in the world's

population, it is easily understood how MetSyn could well be one of the most important diseases to attract the attention of clinicians and researchers alike. Criteria for the differential diagnosis of MetSyn, both epidemiologically and in clinical practice, have been laid out in 1999 by the WHO [9], in 2001 by the American Medical Association (in the National Cholesterol Education Program – NCEP – III definitions) [10] and in 2006 by the International Diabetes Federation [11].

A 2004 study based on prospective European cohort studies (more than 11,000 subjects) found a MetSyn prevalence of 15.7% for men and 14.2% for women [12]; since this study excluded diabetic patients, its results are probably underestimating the prevalence. Other papers underline that, due to the multiplicity of symptoms and measurement methods, it is very difficult to obtain reliable prevalence data and to compare different populations [13]. For example, in 2003 a discrepancy of 13% (13.6% vs. 26.6%) between the WHO and NCEP-III criteria was reported for the prevalence of MetSyn in Mexican subjects; even excluding diabetic patients, this discrepancy was largely maintained (9.2% vs. 21.4%, respectively). However, most studies agree that MetSyn prevalence increases with age: In the year 2000 in the USA, MetSyn prevalence ranged from 6.7% for patients aged 20-29 years to 42% for those aged more than 70 years. The age-adjusted prevalence was 23.7% [14].

Metabolic Syndrome in Psychotic Patients

Obviously, most patients suffering from schizophrenia are treated with some form of pharmacotherapy. As a consequence, it is difficult to separate the direct effect of the disorder on patients' health from that of the medications. Anyway, recent studies on the prevalence of MetSyn in schizophrenic patients are really alarming. About 55% of 252 Dutch patients were found to meet IDF criteria for MetSyn [15]; in a 10-year retrospective study on 174 Malaysian patients, 36% developed metabolic syndrome, 23% were hypertensive and 28% were diabetic, but 100% of them had significantly increased weight, body mass index (BMI), fasting blood sugar and blood pressure [16]. These prevalence data are higher than those of the general population, and should be an important source of alarm for clinicians during the therapy. Nowadays, it is widely acknowledged that antipsychotic therapy can have important, negative effects on the onset of MetSyn.

The Role of Therapeutic Drug Monitoring in Metabolic Syndrome Prevention and Treatment

The frequency and severity of MetSyn can often be correlated with chemical-clinical parameters, in particular with the plasma levels of the antipsychotic medication or some of its metabolites. This positive correlation between plasma

Insulin Therapy and Foetoplacental Endothelial Dysfunction in Gestational Diabetes Mellitus

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Abstract: Gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) is a condition characterised by glucose intolerance first diagnosed in pregnancy. The first line of treatment for women diagnosed with GDM is diet control (GDMd). However, some of these women even after diet persist continue showing hyperglycaemia. The second line of treatment is insulin therapy (GDMi). The latter protocol is reported to be effective in restoring glycaemia of the mother and the baby at birth. However, it is difficult to reach a consensus between the variety of protocols for insulin therapy since it depends on several factors including the population studied, ethnicity, among others. GDMd associates with deleterious effects on the foetoplacental vascular function, mainly due to endothelial dysfunction. These alterations regard with alterations in the L-arginine/nitric oxide signalling pathway, as well as in the expression of insulin receptors A and B, and insulin response. More recent studies suggest that c-Jun N-terminal kinase 1-mediated insulin resistance may result from increased endoplasmic reticulum stress in this type of cells from the human placenta. Interestingly, the insulin therapy is a protocol that does not restore the dysfunctional endothelium as seen in GDMd. Indeed, insulin therapy may associate with additional deleterious effects on the mother, the placenta and foetus, and the newborn in GDM. In this chapter, we summarised some examples of the wide variety of protocols for insulin therapy and the

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potential consequences of this protocol on the foetoplacental unit and the neonate from women with GDM.

Keywords: Diabetes, Diet, Endothelium, Endoplasmic reticulum stress, Gestational diabetes, Human, Insulin, Insulin therapy, Placenta.

INTRODUCTION

Gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) is defined as any degree of glucose intolerance first recognised during pregnancy that is not overt diabetes [1]. The worldwide prevalence of this condition ranges from 6–20% of pregnant women [2, 3]. GDM shows with endothelial dysfunction and altered insulin signalling in the foetoplacental vasculature [4 - 10]. GDM is a disease of pregnancy that not only alters maternal metabolic parameters [11, 12] but also results in adverse foetal and newborn outcome. Worryingly, newborns to GDM pregnancies are prone to developing obesity and type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) in adulthood [13 - 16].

Pregnant women diagnosed with GDM are first enrolled in a protocol including a controlled diet with regular glucose checking and physical activity (hereafter referred to as GDM*d*) [17]. The percentage of women with GDM that achieve suggested glycaemia values (*i.e.* fasting: ≤ 95 mg/dL (5.3 mmol/L), 1 h postprandial: ≤ 140 mg/dL (7.8 mmol/L), 2 h postprandial: ≤ 120 mg/dL (6.7 mmol/L)) [18] by changing their lifestyle is $\sim 75\%$ [1, 5, 14, 17, 19]. Women following a controlled diet but do not reach the recommended glycaemia values are referred to insulin therapy (*i.e.* GDM*i*) [1, 5, 20, 21]. Interestingly, insulin therapy in pregnant women with GDM seems to be equally efficient as diet [21]. It is reported that even when insulin therapy normalises maternal and newborn glycaemia the harmful effect of GDM on the placenta function and the neonate metabolic state persist [5, 22, 23]. Thus, other factors than plasma D-glucose may be involved in the effects of GDM on vascular function in the mother, the foetus, and the newborn [23]. One of the general proposed mechanisms that could explain this phenomenon include a metabolic memory as a phenomenon triggered by a short-term foetal exposure to high D-glucose or oscillating D-glucose level before and during GDM treatment [24].

Several metabolic alterations are seen in the foetoplacental vasculature in GDM, including abnormal metabolism of the endogenous nucleoside adenosine or the cationic amino acid L-arginine, and altered synthesis of nitric oxide (NO). These alterations are crucial in the regulation of the vascular function since these molecules are active vasodilators acting in concert in the placental vasculature in this disease of pregnancy [8 - 10]. Additionally, GDM associates with imbalanced

unfolded protein response (UPR) leading to a state of endoplasmic reticulum (ER) stress. In ER stress, various factors are involved in the modulation of key phenomena that regulate the endothelial function. One of these altered signalling mechanisms is an increase in the expression of c-Jun N-terminal kinase 1 (JNK1), which associated with inhibition of insulin signalling [25]. Whether defective insulin actions in the foetoplacental vasculature in GDM are due to alterations in these mechanisms is unclear. In this review we summarised the current evidence about the treatment with insulin (*i.e.* insulin therapy) in pregnant women with GDM and the potential involvement of insulin signalling on the foetoplacental tissue.

Insulin Therapy in Gestational Diabetes Mellitus

The main goal of insulin therapy in GDM is to reduce the plasma glucose level to a normal range close to the glycaemia seen in pregnant women with a normal pregnancy. The final expected outcome is avoiding hyperglycaemia-associated maternal and foetal complications [5, 21, 26]. Several criteria are reported and used to decide the enrolment of pregnant women with GDM on a diet protocol or insulin therapy [5, 17, 21 - 23]. Individual studies suggest glycaemia values over which the insulin therapy should start. The values vary between 5.2–5.6 mmol/L (94–101 mg/dL) at fasting and between 6.6–7.9 mmol/L (119–142 mg/dL) after 2 h postprandial depending on the studied population [22, 27 - 29]. Efficiency of insulin therapy is expected to reach glycaemia values between 3.3–5 mmol/L (60–90 mg/dL) at fasting, 3.3–5.8 mmol/L (60–105 mg/dL) pre-prandial, 6.1–7.2 mmol/L (110–130 mg/dL) at 1 h post-prandial, 5.0–6.7 mmol/L (90–120 mg/dL) at 2 h post-prandial, and 3.3–6.7 mmol/L (60–120 mg/dL) at bedtime, with glycosylated haemoglobin A_{1c} (HbA_{1c}) within a normal range ($\leq 6\%$) [30]. Unfortunately, one of the main conclusions recently reported for 7381 women with GDM proposed that there are not enough high-quality results to offer significant differences for health outcomes after using insulin in pregnant women with this condition [21, 23].

Protocols of Insulin Therapy

Insulin therapy in pregnant women with GDM refers to the use of neutral protamine Hagedorn (NPH) insulin. In general, a certain dosage of insulin should include 2 to 4 administrations daily. The rapid-acting insulin analogues lispro and aspart are continuously administered in patients that check their blood glucose level regularly and use glucose monitoring devices [31] including patients with type 1 diabetes mellitus (T1DM) [32]. Under this approach the insulin dosage is adjusted according to the variations of the glycaemia during the day. However, several different approaches showed that a proper decision for the administration

CHAPTER 3**Insights on Diabetes, Oxidative Stress and Antioxidant Therapeutic Strategies****Nicolette Nadene Houreld*** and **Naresh Kumar Rajendran***Laser Research Centre, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, 2028, South Africa*

Abstract: Diabetes mellitus (DM) is a serious health concern that affects millions of people worldwide. Despite numerous studies on the topic, the exact mechanisms underlying diabetes progression and its complications is still unclear. Growing evidence suggests that hyperglycemia results in increased reactive oxygen species (ROS) production, leading to oxidative stress which affects and damages various tissues and organs. Oxidative stress results from an imbalance between ROS and antioxidants. During cellular metabolism free radicals such as ROS and reactive nitrogen species (RNS) are produced, and these free radicals have dual effects (both positive and negative) on nearby tissues and activate several oxidative stress-related signaling pathways. Oxidative stress has been identified as a major player in the pathogenesis of diabetes and its associated complications such as stroke, neuropathy, retinopathy, peripheral vascular disease, nephropathy and lower limb ulceration. Oxidative stress damages the surrounding tissue, and the effects continue for extended periods even after blood glucose concentrations return to normal. Prolonged oxidative stress results in insulin resistance, β -cell dysfunction, glucose intolerance and mitochondrial damage. Antioxidants are a group of enzymatic or non-enzymatic molecules that encounter and neutralize free radicals, thereby protecting the body from oxidative stress. Many exogenous molecules such as antioxidant supplements, vitamins (vitamin C and E) and metal ion chelators detoxify free radicals and maintain physiological levels. A better understanding of the involvement of oxidative stress in the pathogenesis of diabetes could have major therapeutic implications for treatment. An effective approach to treat oxidative stress is by using exogenous drugs that mimic antioxidants. Overall, this chapter highlights the understanding of oxidative stress-related mechanisms underlying the development of diabetes. It also elaborates on antioxidant therapy strategies to diminish oxidative stress and to treat diabetic associated complications.

Keywords: Antioxidants, Catalase, Diabetes, Free radicals, Glutathione, Hyperglycemia, Oxidative stress, Reactive oxygen species, Reactive nitrogen species, Superoxide dismutase.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Diabetes mellitus (DM) is a lifelong chronic, metabolic, non-communicable disease (NCD) characterized by prolonged hyperglycemia due to impaired insulin secretion/utilization and insulin metabolism, and is associated with defects in the metabolism of carbohydrates, lipids and proteins. Complications associated with DM vary from person to person and are determined by an individual's health and lifestyle [1, 2]. Worldwide, approximately 422 million people suffer from DM, and it is one of the most common non-epidemic causes of physical impairment and mortality [3, 4]. Hyperglycemia, as a result of DM, affects the vasculature of various organs such as the heart, kidneys, nerves and eyes. It induces myocardial infarction, diabetic nephropathy, neuropathy, retinopathy and atherosclerosis [5]. These complications lead to further secondary complications and are frequently associated with delayed wound healing and lower-limb ulceration, which commonly lead to amputation.

Hyperglycemia elevates the levels of unstable reactive molecules, better known as free radicals, that interact with biological molecules thereby increasing the peroxidation of carbohydrates, proteins and lipids and ultimately oxidative stress, leading to an exacerbation of diabetic complications. Free radicals are detoxified and rendered harmless by antioxidant defense systems, thus antioxidants are required to fight against oxidative stress and to prevent biological systems from damage caused by free radicals. It would appear that both endogenous and exogenous antioxidants are essential in avoiding pathophysiological complications caused by DM. Diabetes is the main cause for imbalances between reactive species and antioxidants in the biological system. Due to stress, age, genetic factors, immunodeficiency and various cell signaling abnormalities, oxidative stress is further increased. These factors interconnect with each other creating an environment that promotes the pathogenesis of various diseased conditions [6].

2. OXIDATIVE STRESS AND FREE RADICALS

Regulation of the redox state is critical for normal cellular functioning, and aerobic organisms have mechanisms in place by way of antioxidant systems to block and prevent the harmful effects of oxidants. Oxidative stress occurs when there is an imbalance between oxidants and antioxidants. The increased production of oxidant radicals over antioxidants plays a significant role in the progression of DM and its associated complications. These unstable free radicals are capable of damaging biological molecules resulting in glycoxidation, which is the oxidation of sugars, glycoproteins and glycolipids, and DNA hydroxylation [7, 8]. Free radical induced oxidative stress and its complications in the human

body are shown in Fig. (1).

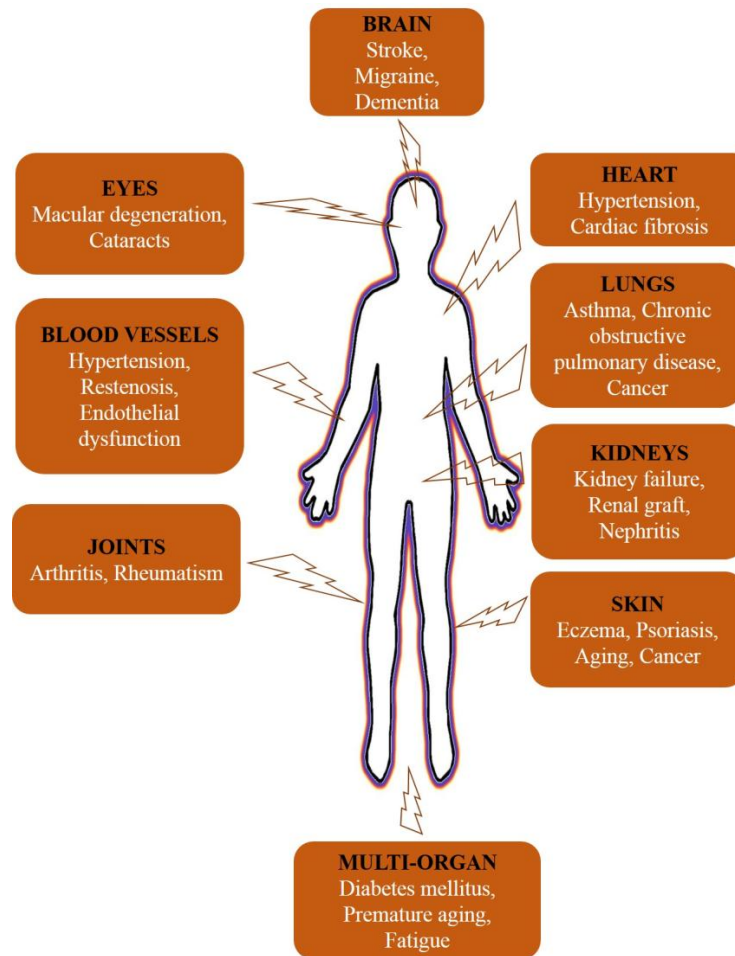


Fig. (1). Free radical induced oxidative stress and its complications in the human body. All most all the organs are affected by oxidative stress; the prolonged oxidative stress ultimately causes various pathophysiological conditions.

Increased free radical formation directly stimulates the immune system, resulting in elevated pro-inflammatory cytokine levels and increased leukocyte infiltration. Increased inflammation and matrix metalloproteinase (MMP) provoke ageing, neurodegenerative disorders, polyneuropathy and autoimmune disorders. Many metals such as iron (Fe), copper (Cu), cobalt (Co) and nickel (Ni) are oxidized by reactive superoxide anions (O_2^-), resulting in the generation of toxic hydroxyl ions ($\cdot OH$). These types of metallic ions boost free radical generation and augment its

Administration of Nano Drugs in the Treatment of Diabetes Mellitus

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Abstract: Diabetes mellitus (DM) is a metabolic disorder which is the most alarming disease of the modern era, which occurs as a result of lack of insulin secretion or reduced insulin secretion or peripheral insulin resistance. Owing to the lifestyle changes, food habitus and stress, it has now become a pandemic. The incidence of diabetes is rapidly increasing worldwide at a dangerous rate. Over the past 30 years, the status of diabetes has changed from being considered as a mild disorder of the elderly to one of the major causes of morbidity and mortality, affecting the youth and middle-aged people. As per the WHO, 171 million cases were reported in 2000 and are expected to increase to 366 million by 2030. DM incidences continuous to rise and pose a serious threat to human health. DM prevalence is increasing due to lifestyle, ethnicity, and age. Insulin has remained the main treatment for Type 1 diabetes and many Type 2 diabetic patients since its discovery, through parenteral insulin administration. Nanoparticles (NPs), which are minute structures ranging from size 1 to 100nm, are being studied for the treatment of various diseases. Considering the versatility of NPs, it also gives hope for better treatment options in diabetes. Different strategies have been used to manipulate insulin by using NPs, such as encapsulated delivery, *etc.* The objective of this chapter is to resolve the issues concerned with the oral delivery of insulin and also to discuss possible routes for the administration and the use of NPs for the best delivery of insulin. Nanotechnology, as a promising field, has opened new ways for the treatment of DM.

Keywords: Diabetes, Nanoparticles, Nanomedicine, Oral therapy, Oral drug delivery.

INTRODUCTION TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF DRUGS BY ORAL ROUTE

The most common route of drug administration is the oral route. Since the gastro-

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intestinal tract has a highly absorptive surface, the majority of the drugs are administered orally. However, there are hindrances to this route as antigen inspecting and processing cells are found throughout the gastrointestinal tract (GIT) which cause immunogenic destruction of any compound administered for a longer period. Hence, nanoparticles (NPs) are used since they can be adjusted to increase or decrease bioadhesion to the mucosa and target the particular site [1]. Since mucus layers provide high protection for NP penetration, the residing time of NP is under trial for better results. Decreasing the residing time of NPs leads to failure to penetrate the mucus and trapping and clearance of medicine [2]. Human insulin is a protein composed of amino acids, it is basically a dimer having A and B chains linked by disulfide bonds [3]. When taken orally, this protein is degraded in the GIT before its action and absorption. To overcome this, it is given subcutaneously for better results.

Nanotechnology is the latest developing science with unique applications. Amazed by its properties, scientists have been extensively researching NPs for the development of newer options in the treatment of different diseases. NPs are minute structures with desirable properties having size 1-100 nm in any dimension. Due to their size, when compared to the larger molecules, they are better absorbed and uptaken by intestinal epithelium. As a result of minor modifications in the NP surface and hydrophobicity, the transport across the intestinal cells can be enhanced. The surface properties can be modified by nonspecific changes on the apical cell surface or by grafting a particular ligand targeting the intestinal cells [4,5] The features highlighted in the chapter are regarding the oral administration of the drugs using nanotechnology to bring about a change in anti-diabetic therapy and to help in the improvement of therapeutic efficacy.

DM is a metabolic disorder characterized by an impairment in the metabolism of carbohydrates, proteins and lipids leading to hyperglycemia resulting from the insufficiency of insulin or insulin resistance. DM is one of the fastest growing diseases expected to increase to about 366 million cases by year 2030 as per the predictions given by the WHO [6]. The etiology of diabetes varies due to the impairment in insulin production, reduced response to insulin by the body or insulin insensitivity [7]. Based on the etiology, it is categorized into:

TYPE 1: It is characterized by the absence of insulin production which is immune-mediated or idiopathic resulting from the destruction of β cells of the pancreas [7].

TYPE 2: It is characterized by relative insulin deficiency and insulin resistance resulting from genetic, environmental and behavioral risk factors (stress and lifestyle) [8, 9].

Also, there is a condition known as gestational DM, occurring from the changes in the hormones and body state during pregnancy (which usually resolves following delivery) [10].

CLINICAL FEATURES OF DIABETES

Described as 3P, the symptoms of both type 1 and type 2 are polyphagia (excessive desire to eat) polydipsia (intense thirst) and polyuria (frequent urination and increased urinary frequency at night). In addition, there may be symptoms resulting from hyperglycemia and glycosuria, like fatigue, muscle cramps, impairment of vision, constipation and candidiasis [11].

Type 1 diabetes lasting for a longer period causes complications like micro and macrovascular diseases of heart, arteries and peripheral blood vessels [12 - 14]. Also, there is a higher risk of atherosclerosis in type 2 patients who also have other risk factors like hypertension, obesity and hyperlipidemia. Renal changes occur in longstanding uncontrolled diabetes, eventually leading to end-stage renal disease. There are also retinal and ocular changes in DM, such as early cataract and diabetic retinopathy, causing significant morbidity. Opportunistic infections, commonly of bacterial and fungal origin, are also common in DM.

Pathophysiology

Hyperglycemia induces physiological and behavioral responses in the body (as a result of hyperglycemia, insulin secretion is increased in coordination with the brain).

Type 1 DM

It arises from the autoimmune destruction of insulin-producing cells of the pancreas by CD4+ CD8+ T cells and macrophages. The features include immune-competent cells infiltrating pancreatic islets in the presence of islet cell-specific autoantibodies. Moreover, there is an association of the disease with the genes of class 2 MHC. Also, there are alterations in T cell-mediated immunoregulation and autoimmunity. 85% of the patients showed islet cell antibodies and anti-insulin antibodies in their blood even before receiving insulin therapy. In addition, there is an impairment or inappropriate response in glucagon which is not suppressed by hyperglycemia [15].

SGLT-2 Inhibitors: An Evidence-Based Perspective

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Abstract: Diabetes mellitus (DM) is one of the most prevalent diseases of modern society. There are several therapeutic options available, but they also have many shortcomings. With the limitations and pitfalls of the existing therapies of diabetes, there is always a need for better drugs. This review is an attempt to give comprehensive details about the merits and demerits of a class of drugs called SGLT-2 inhibitors. SGLT-2 inhibitors act by increasing glucose excretion through urine and do not have any effect on insulin secretion, therefore, the risk of hypoglycemia is less. SGLT-2 inhibitors that are in clinical use are: dapagliflozin, empagliflozin, canagliflozin, and ertugliflozin. Considering the benefits offered by SGLT-2 inhibitors over existing antidiabetics, they deserve an important place in the therapy of T2DM and are found to be useful in T1DM, as studies have suggested previously. Beneficial effects of these drugs extend beyond controlling hyperglycemia, *e.g.*, reduction in body weight, reduction in blood pressure and a proven and appreciable reduction in cardiovascular adverse events, maintenance of arterial elasticity and decrease in visceral adipose tissue deposition. The demonstration of such beneficial effects in various clinical studies has established them as one of the important components of antidiabetic therapy. However, in the light of recent safety concerns raised on such molecules would help prescribers to take an informed decision about risks *versus* benefits while prescribing these agents to their patients.

Keywords: Canagliflozin, Dapagliflozin, Diabetes mellitus, Empagliflozin, Hyperglycemia, Mycotic genital infections, Osmotic diuresis, SGLT-2 inhibitors.

INTRODUCTION

Diabetes mellitus (DM) is currently one of the most prevalent diseases in the world. DM presently possesses a big global disease burden with an estimated prevalence of 422 million cases as per the WHO 2016 data and is likely to be doubled by the year 2030 [1, 2].

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Type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) is a systemic disorder with characteristic hyperglycemia that results due to β cell dysfunction and/or insulin resistance in the peripheral tissues or both [3]. In the present scenario with an increase in the population, the incidence of the disease is increasing day by day. Factors such as age, urbanization, and a sedentary lifestyle, are usually common risk factors. The strongest risk for hyperglycemia and insulin resistance can be attributed to obesity which can be further possibly related to subclinical inflammation and increased oxidative stress which culminates into damaging the β -cells in the pancreas [4, 5].

Need for New Targets

Antidiabetic drugs in the treatment of T2DM predominantly act by increasing insulin release from the pancreas, increasing the peripheral insulin sensitivity, negatively regulating glucagon secretion, modulating hepatic glucose production or blocking the intestinal glucose uptake [6]. With the progression of disease in T2DM patients, there is a worsening function of the pancreatic β -cells and/or associated with increased insulin resistance, there is perpetually a persistent need for exploring newer drug targets and treatment strategies to control/cure the disease [7]. Several conventional antidiabetics are available, which come with multiple pitfalls, *e.g.*, many sulfonylureas are associated with variable cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk and mortality outcomes [8, 9]. Weight gain is an issue commonly related to thiazolidinediones and sulfonylurea which can further turn out to be a burden in T2DM [10]. In the newly developed agents, Glucagon-like peptide 1 (GLP- 1) analogues are associated with gastroparesis and risk of thyroid cancer in animal models [11, 12]. The side effects of pancreatitis with GLP-1 analogue were initially concerned, but a recent study has confirmed it to be negative [13]. Earlier, Dipeptidyl peptidase 4 (DPP-4) inhibitors, have been reported to cause nasopharyngitis, upper respiratory tract infection, headache and pancreatitis but recent evidence shows there is no risk of increased infections or pancreatitis with these drugs [14, 15]. The limitations of existing therapies serve as a ground for the development of newer molecules which can help improve glycemic control in T2DM without the danger of hypoglycemia, weight gain, improve β -cell function and decrease complications associated with diabetes [16].

Glucose Handling by Kidneys

In normoglycemic individuals having a mean plasma glucose concentration of - 5.5 mmol/L and a normal glomerular filtration rate (GFR) of 125 ml/min/1.73 m² in adults, the kidney plays a significant role in glucose homeostasis by reabsorption of about 160–180 g of glucose that kidneys filter each day [17, 18]. A normal individual has a very minute or no glucose in the urine. Kidneys maintain this glucose homeostasis because almost 99% of the filtered glucose gets

reabsorbed by the proximal tubule and returns to the blood. Kidneys also contribute to gluconeogenesis and help to maintain the blood glucose level, both the mechanisms are independent of each other [19]. Sustained hyperglycemia as in DM leads to defects in the absorption of glucose which leads to glucosuria. Hyperglycemia enhances the amounts of glucose filtered and increases the reabsorption of glucose.

Role Of SGLT-2 In Kidneys

About 80-90% of the glucose load is reabsorbed from the proximal tubule by the high-capacity sodium-glucose cotransporter 2 (SGLT2). Whereas, remaining 10–20% glucose is absorbed by SGLT1 which is more in the distal parts of the proximal convoluted tubule (PCT) [20].

SGLT-2 Inhibitors- A Targeted Approach to Curb Hyperglycaemia

History

Phlorizin was the first developed SGLT-2 inhibitor, which was extracted from the apple tree bark in 1835. The development of phlorizin was terminated because of its non-selective nature, its rapid degradation by *lactase-phlorizin hydrolase* in the intestine and poor absorption from the gastrointestinal tract led to its low bioavailability and local gastrointestinal (GI) adverse effects like diarrhea [21]. Similarly, sergliflozin also failed in clinical development because of low bioavailability and short half-life [22].

With the increasing importance of this target, continued researches led to the development of novel selective SGLT-2 inhibitors. SGLT-1 selectivity increases GI adverse effects like diarrhea, so to increase the SGLT-2: SGLT-1 selectivity and to minimize the GI adverse effects, the chemical structure of phlorizin was modified [23]. The C-link between the glucose and phenol moiety in phlorizin was replaced by O-link which imparted greater resistance to β -glucosidase and other enzymes leading to greater oral bioavailability of the newer molecules [24]. The molecular modifications increased the SGLT-2 selectivity and half-life [24].

SGLT-2 inhibitors

The mechanism of glucose control in DM is by blockade SGLT-2 inhibition, which leads to an increase in glucose excretion through the urine. As these molecules do not have any effect on insulin secretion, therefore, the risk of hypoglycemia is less, the loss of glucose leads to calorie deficit, which would decrease the body weight, an effect which is instrumental in DM [25, 26].

SUBJECT INDEX

A

- Acid(s) 90, 92, 95, 96, 100, 106, 122
 ascorbic 95
 caprylic 106
 glycolic 122
 HOCL-hypochlorous 96
 hypochlorous 90, 92
 lactic 122
 lipoic 95
 phenolic 95, 100
 thiobarbituric 106
 uric 92, 95
 Actinomycetes 94
 Activated NF- κ B 104
 Activation 2, 75, 76, 77, 93, 100, 101, 102, 104, 105
 lipoxigenase 100
 preferential 75
 Activity 7, 22, 67, 72, 74, 79, 93, 97, 99, 100, 106, 107, 126, 132
 biological 93, 126
 catalytic 93
 enzymatic 132
 free radical scavenging 99
 physical 67, 72, 79
 redox 106
 strong antioxidant 100
 Acute 7, 13, 144
 kidney injury 144
 mania 13
 relapse 7
 Adenosine 67, 74, 75, 103
 endogenous nucleoside 67
 Adenosine triphosphate 90, 91
 Adipocytokines 7
 Adiponectin 7
 Adiposity 11, 73
 Adolescents 4, 9, 10, 16, 19, 23, 26, 27, 28, 31
 psychotic 19
 AGE-advanced glycation 102
 Agents 1, 22, 100, 126, 142
 anti-hyperglycemic 126, 142
 atypical antipsychotic 1
 chemical 100
 opioid 22
 Akathisia 17
 Akt 76
 phosphorylation 76
 signalling pathway 76
 Alanine aminotransferase 34
 Albuminuria 147
 Alpha-glucosidases inhibitors 127
 Alumina titanium 122
 Alzheimer's disease 119
 American diabetes association (ADA) 120
 Amino-terminal kinase 104
 Amisulpride 8, 9, 12, 32
 analysis 9
 Amputations 88, 119, 142, 145
 foot 145
 lower limb 142
 Amyloid degeneration 126
 Angiogenesis 92
 Anion 75, 97
 super oxide 97
 Anthocyanins 97
 Anthracyclins 93
 Antidiabetics 138, 139, 141, 143, 147
 oral 141
 Antidiabetic strategy 143
 Antihyperglycemic agent 142
 Anti-inflammatory effects 126
 Anti-insulin antibodies 118
 Antioxidant 87, 92, 93, 95, 97, 99, 106
 enzymes 92, 93, 95, 97
 therapy strategies 87
 vitamins 99, 106
 Antioxidant defenses 88, 94, 97, 98, 100
 protective 94
 systems 88, 94, 100
 Antioxidants 87, 88, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 99, 100, 105, 106, 107, 108
 endogenous 95, 108
 exogenous 88, 95, 96
 non-enzymatic 95, 96, 99
 phenolic 100

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Antipsychotics 8, 11, 12, 18, 20, 26, 29, 33, 34
Apolipoprotein 6
Apoptosis 90, 106
 preventing 106
Aripiprazole 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 32, 33, 34
 adjunct 12
 augmentation 12, 25
 open-label 9
Arrhythmias 30
Articulated syndrome 2
Asenapine 1, 13, 14, 24, 35
 analysis of 14
 treatment 13, 14
Aseptic techniques 128
Atherosclerosis 88, 104, 118
Atypical antipsychotics 4, 7, 8, 9, 13, 19, 28, 30, 34
Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) 7, 27
Autoimmune disorders 89, 92, 100
Auto-oxidative glycosylation 101

B

Bacteria 94
 lactic acid 94
Balanoposthitis 144
Basal-bolus insulin regimen 71
 β -cell function 23, 139
 assessment-estimated 23
 β -cells 21, 100, 101, 105, 127, 139
 pancreatic 21, 100, 101, 105, 139
Biodegradable lipids 129
Biological fluids 1, 9, 14, 20, 25, 34
 human 1, 14
Blood glucose 4, 6, 11, 16, 21, 23, 24, 26, 30, 33, 34, 104
 capillary 34
 elevated 104
Blood glucose 7, 17, 22, 68, 77, 103, 105, 140
 elevation 22
 levels 7, 17, 68, 103, 105, 140
 values 77
Blood pressure 3, 11, 12, 17, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 29, 138, 145, 146
 diastolic 17, 22, 23, 25, 29
 lower diastolic 12
 systolic 23
Blood urea nitrogen (BUN) 145

Blood vessels 99, 103, 118, 119
 peripheral 118
BMI and 10, 27
 total cholesterol 27
 waist circumference 10
Body mass index (BMI) 3, 4, 11, 12, 15, 16, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 29, 34, 74
 pre-pregnancy 74

C

Candidiasis 118
Carbohydrates 70, 71, 88, 98, 104, 117, 127
 metabolism of 88, 98, 117
Carbon nanotubes 121
Cardiovascular 1, 92, 99, 100, 119, 138, 139, 146
 adverse events 138
 complications 92, 119
 disease 1, 99, 100, 139, 146
Cardiovascular events 2, 142, 146, 147
 developing 147
 major adverse 142
Cariprazine 28
Carotenoids 95
Caspasanthin 100
CAT enzyme 106
Cataract glaucoma 119
CAT-catalase 96
Cationic 74, 130
 amino acid 74
 lipid emulsion 130
Cell 98, 118, 131, 139
 cycle 98
 damage 98
 dysfunction 139
 function 131
 -mediated immunoregulation 118
Cellular 87, 90, 92, 96, 97, 100, 101
 antioxidant defense systems 96
 functions 94
 glucose uptake 100
 metabolism 87, 97
 pathways 101
 signaling 90, 92
Chemical-clinical correlations (CCCs) 4, 5, 35
Chemical structure 8, 10, 14, 15, 19, 20, 21, 26, 28, 31, 32, 141, 142
 and 3D-spacefill structure 8, 10, 14, 15, 19, 20, 21, 26, 28, 31, 32

- of canagliflozin 141
 - of dapagliflozin 141
 - of empagliflozin 142
 - Cholesterol 7, 11, 13, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 30, 33
 - non-HDL 11
 - total blood 33
 - Clozapine 4, 12, 15, 16, 17, 21, 23, 26, 30, 32, 34, 35
 - analysis of 17
 - comparing 17
 - monotherapy 16
 - therapy 15, 30
 - treatment 15, 16
 - Cochrane schizophrenia group trials register 26
 - Combination 94, 100, 124, 125, 127, 129, 130, 142, 143, 144
 - ertugliflozin/metformin 143
 - ertugliflozin/sitagliptin 143
 - Combinatorial therapy 107
 - Comparison of risperidone 29
 - Complexes 106, 124
 - metal 106
 - multienzyme 106
 - polyelectrolyte 124
 - Complex hyphenated techniques 18
 - Conditions 2, 66, 67, 68, 74, 77, 78, 88, 89, 92, 93, 101, 103, 104, 105, 108, 118
 - atherosclerotic 104
 - diabetic 101, 103
 - diseased 88, 93
 - induced disease 108
 - microangiopathic 104
 - pathophysiological 89, 92, 93, 104
 - Coronary artery 12, 27, 29, 34, 119
 - disease risk 12, 27, 29, 34
 - Cycle 93, 100
 - reduction-oxidation 100
 - Cyclic polyamines 107
 - Cysteine 94
 - Cytoplasm 92
- D**
- Damage 87, 88, 90, 95, 98, 99, 100, 103, 107, 119
 - cellular 95, 107
 - eye 119
 - kidney 119
 - microvascular 103
 - mitochondrial 87
 - neuronal 98, 99
 - photochemical 103
 - vascular 103
 - visual 90
 - Dapagliflozin effect on cardiovascular events 146
 - Deaths 2, 98, 142, 146
 - cardiovascular 142
 - induced cell 98
 - Defective insulin actions 68
 - Defects 88, 119, 140
 - pathological 119
 - Degradation 101, 125, 140
 - fructose 101
 - rapid 140
 - Density lipoproteins, low 101
 - Destruction 92, 117, 118
 - autoimmune 118
 - immunogenic 117
 - pathogen 92
 - Detoxification 90
 - Detoxify 87, 99, 105
 - metal ion chelators 87
 - Detoxifying 105
 - Diabetes 68, 72, 87, 106, 108, 119, 145, 147
 - associated complications 108
 - insulin-deficient 145
 - management 106, 147
 - maturity-onset 119
 - mellitus, insulin therapy in gestational 68, 72
 - progression 87
 - Diabetic 12, 25, 87, 88, 94, 100, 101, 103, 105, 118, 119, 141, 145
 - associated complications 87
 - complications 88, 94, 100, 101, 105
 - glucose tolerant 12
 - ketoacidosis 25, 119, 141, 145
 - nephropathy 88
 - retinopathy 103, 118
 - Diarrhea 119, 127, 140
 - Diseases 2, 76, 87, 98, 103, 107, 116, 117, 118, 119, 126, 139, 142, 144, 145, 146
 - aggravating 107
 - amyloid-related 126
 - chronic kidney 145
 - chronic multifactorial 2
 - ischemic heart 146

macrovascular 118
 metabolic syndrome-associated 76
 neurological 98
 peripheral artery 142
 peripheral vascular 87, 103
 renal 118, 119, 142, 144
 Disorder 2, 3, 7, 9, 20, 24, 27, 33, 116, 117, 144
 autism spectrum 7, 27
 metabolic 116, 117, 144
 schizoaffective 9, 20, 24, 33
 Disposable pipette extraction 6
 Disruption 11, 32, 76
 metabolic 11, 32
 DNA 88, 90, 92, 93, 101
 adducts, producing 101
 and producing pyrimidine oxidation products 92
 damage 93
 hydroxylation 88
 strand damage 101
 Dried 6, 15, 20, 35
 blood spots (DBS) 6, 15, 20, 35
 plasma spots (DPS) 6, 15
 Drug(s) 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 21, 25, 28, 32, 73, 74, 79, 117, 121, 122, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 138, 144, 146
 anti-hyperglycaemic pharmacological 79
 antipsychotic 1, 2, 5, 21
 electroactivity 25
 maltodextrin-based proniosomal 129
 oral 73, 132
 oral hypoglycaemic 74
 plasma levels 5
 -polymer ratio 130
 Dysfunction 74, 87, 102, 103, 105, 106
 β -cell 87
 diabetic-induced cardiomyocyte 106
 diastolic 28
 insulin receptor 105
 mitochondrial 102
 pancreatic islet 105

E

Enantioselective analysis 9
 Endocytosis 121
 Endoplasmic reticulum 67, 76, 78
 homeostasis 76
 kinase 76

 stress 67, 76, 78
 Endothelial cells (EC) 74, 77, 95, 96, 97, 98, 103, 104
 Endothelium 66, 67, 74, 75, 76, 103
 and endothelial cells 103
 dysfunctional 66
 fetoplacental 74, 76
 Enzymatic barriers 125
 Enzymes 76, 93, 94, 97, 98, 100, 108, 124, 126, 140
 deactivates 93
 endogenous antioxidant 97
 inactive 98
 inositol-requiring 76
 proteolytic 124
 radical generating 108
 Enzymic antioxidant 98
 European medicines agency (EMA) 142
 Exacerbate 2, 17, 93, 101
 agitation 17

F

Factors 5, 66, 67, 68, 71, 76, 77, 78, 88, 92, 93, 103, 104, 107, 139
 activating transcription 76
 episodic 5
 genetic 88
 growth 92
 hypofibrinolytic 103
 inhibiting FOXO transcription 93
 tumor necrosis 104
 tumour necrosis 77
 Fasting 3, 12, 32, 34, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 120
 blood glucose 12, 34
 blood sugar 3
 insulin levels 32
 triglyceride levels 12
 Fasting glucose 7, 11, 12, 34, 69, 71, 145
 elevated 71
 elevated morning 69
 reducing plasma 145
 Fasting plasma 11, 24, 33, 120
 blood sugar test 120
 glucose 33, 120
 levels of total cholesterol 11, 24
 Fat tissues 7, 99
 FBS tests 120
 FDA-approved nanotechnology 133
 Fenton reactions 91, 92, 97

- Fluid 15, 121
 cerebrospinal 15
- Foetal 68, 72, 73, 74, 75, 79
 abnormalities 73
 complications 68
 endothelium 75
 glycaemia 72, 74, 79
- Foetoplacental 66, 67, 68, 72, 73, 74, 76, 77, 78
 reduced human 74
 dysfunction 74
 endothelium 74, 77
 tissues 68, 76, 77
 vasculature 67, 68, 72, 74, 75, 77, 78
- Forensic purposes 9, 14
- Free radical(s) 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 94, 95, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 103, 105, 107, 108
 induced oxidative stress 88, 89
 mitochondrial 108
 oxygen-containing 90
 scavenging enzymes 97
- Function 66, 67, 72, 77, 90, 94, 95, 98, 99, 100, 101, 105, 113, 126, 139, 142
 diastolic 147
 endothelial 68, 72, 94
 metabolic 94
 mitochondrial 98
 organ 126
 renal 126, 142
 vascular 66, 67, 72, 77
 vitamins 99
- G**
- Gaschromatography 9
- Gastric 124, 131
 acidity 124
 emptying 131
- Gastroparesis 139
- GDM-associated insulin resistance 76
- Genital infections 144
 developing 144
- Genital mycotic infections 144
- Gestational diabetes 67
- GI disturbances 130
- GIPET system 125
- Glaucomatous injury 90
- Glomerular filtration rate (GFR) 139, 144, 145
- Glucagon 105, 118, 131
 suppression 131
- Glucokinase 100, 119
 gene mutation on chromosome 119
- Gluconeogenesis 105, 129, 140
- Glucosamine 124
- Glucose 1, 7, 11, 21, 32, 66, 67, 78, 87, 101, 139
 handling by kidneys 139
 homeostasis 139
 intolerance 66, 67, 87
 metabolism 1, 11, 21, 32, 78
 oxidation 101
 tolerance 7
- Glucose absorption 104, 140, 143
 delaying intestinal 143
- Glucose excretion 140, 141, 143, 144
 renal 143
 urinary 143
- Glucose levels 15, 23, 24, 27, 32, 33, 69, 103, 104, 120, 130, 131, 132
 elevated post-prandial 69
 overnight fasting plasma 104
 stabilized blood 23
 stabilizing plasma 104
- Glucosuria 140
- Glucuronidation 141
- Glutathione 87, 93, 94, 95, 97, 98, 100
 intracellular 100
 peroxidases 95, 98
 peroxidase 93
 reductase (GR) 95, 97
- Glycated hemoglobin 7, 34, 101
 levels 101
- Glycogenesis 105
- Glycogenolysis 105
- Glycolipids 88
- Glycoproteins 88
- Glycosylamine 101
- Glycosylated hemoglobin 33
- Glycooxidation 88
- H**
- Help prescribers 138
- Heme oxygenase 95
- Hepatic 123, 125, 139
 directed vesicle 125
 glucose production 123, 139
 portal circulation 123
- Hepatotoxicity 129

- High-performance liquid chromatographic (HPLC) 9, 18, 25
- Homeostasis 76, 103
redox 103
- Human 74, 75, 76, 77
cationic amino acid transporter 74
placental microvascular 74
umbilical vein endothelial cells (HUVECs) 74, 75, 76, 77
- Hydrogen peroxide 90, 91, 92, 93, 97, 98, 100
- Hydrophilic PEG 131
- Hydrophobic polyesters 131
- Hyperbilirubinemia 73
- Hypercholesterolemia 1, 2, 27
- Hyperglycemia 87, 88, 100, 101, 102, 105, 117, 118, 119, 122, 126, 129, 138, 139, 140
characteristic 139
chronic 122
prolonged 88
- Hyperhomocysteinemia 98
- Hyperinsulinemia 101, 119
- Hyperlipidemia 118
- Hypertriglyceridemia 1, 2, 8, 15, 25, 27
- Hypoglycemia 119, 127, 139
- Hypoxanthine 92
- I**
- Immunocytes 92
- Immunodeficiency 88
- India Biocon Ltd 125
- Indices, glycemic 19
- Indispensable therapeutic target 143
- Infection 139, 145
upper respiratory tract 139
- Inflammation 77, 103, 104, 105, 139
subclinical 139
sustained 105
systemic 103
vascular 103, 104
- Inflammatory 102, 104
cytokines 104
mediators 102
- Influence lipids 32
- Insulin 23, 68, 71, 73, 74, 75, 88, 105, 106, 116, 117, 119, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 133
and oral hypoglycemic agents 122
-induced dilation 75
insensitivity 117, 119
metabolism 88
phospholipid 124
-providing techniques 133
sensitivity 75, 106, 126, 127
signalling 68
- Insulin receptors (IRs) 66, 72, 75, 76, 101, 104
and signalling pathways 75
- Insulin therapy 73, 74
comparing maternal 73
maternal 74
- Intensive care unit 73
- Interleukins 77, 104
- Isolated exogenous antioxidants 95
- K**
- Krebs cycle 122
- L**
- Levels 4, 22, 147
plasma lipid 22
plasma quetiapine 4
serum uric acid 147
- Lipid 11, 32, 93, 98, 99, 126
metabolism 11, 32
peroxidation 93, 99, 126
peroxides 98
- Liposomes 121, 124, 125, 129, 132
loaded multivesicular 132
- Liquid chromatographic, high-performance 9
- Liquid chromatography 9, 15
microflow 9
ultrahigh performance 15
- Liquid-liquid extraction (LLE) 13, 14, 17, 20, 25, 27, 30, 31, 35
- Low density lipoproteins (LDL) 6, 12, 21, 23, 24, 28, 33, 34, 101
- Lurasidone treatment 19
- M**
- Macrosomia 73, 120
fetal 120
lower 73
- Maternal glycaemia 74
- Mechanisms 87, 143

- novel 143
 - oxidative stress-related 87
 - Medications 2, 3, 5, 33, 34, 122, 129
 - antidiabetic 34
 - anti-diabetic 122, 129
 - psychotropic 5
 - Metabolic 4, 5, 6, 10, 15, 16, 22, 26, 28, 34, 75, 76, 102, 126
 - abnormalities 6, 28, 102, 126
 - dysfunctions 15
 - effects 6, 10, 15, 26
 - Impairments 16, 22
 - pathway 76
 - phenotype 75
 - side effects 4, 5, 16, 26, 34
 - Metabolism 33, 72, 74, 78, 100, 106, 147
 - aerobic 106
 - fuel 147
 - vascular 72
 - vascular endothelium 78
 - Metabolite(s) 1, 3, 4, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 25, 27, 31
 - inactive asenapine 14
 - norquetiapine 27
 - plasma levels 4
 - Metalloenzyme 97
 - Microextraction 6
 - solid phase 6
 - Micromatrices 6, 15
 - Microsampling 6, 35
 - volumetric absorption 6
 - Migration 90, 92
 - cellular 92
 - Mitochondria 90, 93, 97, 98, 147
 - myocardial 147
 - Mitochondrial 90, 92, 93
 - electron transport chain 90, 92
 - fusion 93
 - ROS 92
 - ROS production 93
 - superoxide ions 93
 - Mitogenic phenotype 75
 - Molecules 30, 87, 88, 90, 91, 92, 94, 99, 101, 103, 124, 125, 131, 138, 139, 140, 142, 143, 144, 147
 - biological 88, 90, 94
 - cell adhesion 103
 - chiral 30
 - exogenous 87
 - fat-soluble lipophilic 99
 - free radical 90
 - hydrophilic 99, 124
 - non-enzymatic 87
 - sulfur 94
 - toxic 101
 - tripeptide glutathione 94
 - Monotherapy 141, 142
 - Morbidity 116, 120
 - maternal 120
 - Mortality 88, 98, 107, 116, 142, 146
 - cardiovascular 146
 - perinatal 98
 - Mycotic genital infections 138
 - Myocardial infarction 88, 98, 103, 142
 - nonfatal 142
- ## N
- Nasopharyngitis 139
 - Nateglinide repaglinide 127
 - National cholesterol education program 3
 - Necrotizing fasciitis 145
 - Neonatal jaundice 73
 - Neuroleptics 6
 - Neuropathy 87, 88, 106, 119
 - diabetic 106
 - peripheral 119
 - Neutral protamine hagedorn (NPH) 68, 70, 71
 - Nitric oxide synthase 93
 - endothelial 93
 - Nitrogen-phosphorus detection (NPD) 25
 - Non-communicable disease (NCD) 88
 - Non-comparative trials 14
 - Nonenzymatic antioxidants 95
 - Non-miscible liquids 130
 - Non-psychotic disorders 9
 - Non-selective nature 140
 - Normal 105, 139
 - fasting state 105
 - glomerular filtration rate 139
 - Nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) 18
- ## O
- Olanzapine 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 32, 33
 - comparing 23, 32
 - long-acting injectable 28
 - Olanzapine 4, 11, 13, 21, 22, 23, 24, 33
 - induced metabolic side effects 22

metabolite 4
therapy 13, 24
-treated cohort 24, 33
treatment 11, 21, 22, 23, 24
Oral 116, 122, 126, 127
 hypoglycemic agents 122, 126, 127
 therapy 116
Oral insulin delivery 124
 multiple daily 124
Oxidases 92, 93, 105
 enzyme monoamine 93
 xanthine 92
Oxidation 17, 88, 90, 91, 93, 94, 100, 101, 102
 amino acid 101
 fatty acid 90
 monoamine 93
 of DNA 101
 of thiols in biological systems 94
Oxidative damage 103
Oxidative stress 87, 88, 89, 90, 93, 94, 95, 99, 100, 101, 103, 105, 106, 107, 108
 damages 87
 prolonged 87, 89, 101, 103
Oxygen 90, 91, 93, 95, 97, 98, 103
 consumption 103

P

Paliperidone 11, 23, 26, 29, 32
 tolerability of 11, 32
Pancreatitis 25, 139
 fatal acute 25
Pathogenesis 87, 88
Pathologies, concomitant 6
PERK-downstream target protein 77
Phagocytosis 90, 92
Phospholipid hydroperoxide monomer 99
PKC 101, 102
 functions 101
 -protein kinase 102
Plasma 9, 13, 27, 30, 31, 35
 macromolecules 9
 protein precipitation (PPP) 13, 27, 30, 31, 35
Plasma glucose 68, 29, 130, 139, 141
 concentration 139
 levels 68, 130
 reducing fasting 141
Platelet activation 98, 103, 104

 regulating 104
Polycationic mucoadhesive 124
Polymeric NPs in combination 129
Polymers 121, 122, 124, 128, 131
 acrylic 124
 biodegradable 121
 thermo gelling 131
Polyneuropathy 89
Polyphenolic compounds 100
Postprandial 71, 141
 glucose absorption 141
 hyperglycaemia 71
Process 75, 92, 98, 103, 120, 126
 atherothrombotic 103
 detoxification 98
 fibrillogenesis 126
 splicing 75
Production 87, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 99, 101, 102, 104, 105, 132
 endogenous glucose 104
 impaired antioxidant 99
Protein 101
 damage 101
 degradation 101
 translations, irregular 101
Protein kinase C (PKC) 101, 102, 104, 105
Protein kinases 72, 75, 76, 92, 93, 101
 enzyme 101
 mitogen-activated 72, 75
Protocols of insulin therapy 68
Proximal convoluted tubule (PCT) 140, 144, 145
Psychotic relapse 34
Pyruvate 100, 106
 dehydrogenase 106
 kinase 100

Q

Queensland clinical guideline (QCG) 71
Quetiapine 7, 10, 12, 20, 24, 25, 26, 27, 32, 34
 analysis of 27
 comparing 10, 26
 extended release 20

R

Reactions 13, 90, 91, 94, 97, 101, 121, 132
 cellular redox 94

enzymatic 90, 97, 101
 hydroxylation 92
 immune 132
 ionizing 90
 non-enzymatic 90
 regulating redoxoxidation 94
 Reactive 87, 90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 101, 102, 105, 106, 107, 126
 nitrogen species (RNS) 87, 90, 93, 107, 126
 oxygen species (ROS) 87, 90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 101, 102, 105, 106, 107
 Reducing 91, 99
 diabetic complications 99
 molecular oxygen 91
 Reduction 12, 34, 91, 92, 104, 126, 138, 143, 144, 145, 146
 large postprandial glucose 143
 plasma LDL 12
 Regulation 67, 88, 92, 94
 redox balance 92
 Renin-angiotensin system (RAS) 145
 Resistance 5, 22, 66, 78, 116, 119, 128, 131, 140
 assessment-estimated insulin 22
 heat 128
 mediated insulin 66
 peripheral insulin 116, 119
 physiological insulin 78
 reducing insulin 131
 supraphysiological insulin 78
 Respective alcohol byproducts 97
 Respiratory distress 73
 Restoration 103
 Restricted 9, 27, 73
 access material (RAM) 9, 27
 foetus growth 73
 Retinal detachment 103
 Retinopathy 87, 88, 103, 119
 Risperidone 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 34, 35
 metabolite 29
 plasma levels 4
 therapy 29
 treatment 12, 27, 28
 ROS 87, 90, 95, 104, 126
 and reactive nitrogen species 87, 126
 antioxidants transform 95
 generation 104
 normal physiological levels 90

S

Secretion 26, 105, 139
 regulating glucagon 139
 Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) 5
 Selenium 95, 98, 99
 cofactor 98
 Selenocysteine peroxidase 98
 Signaling pathways 87, 96, 101, 104, 107
 oxidative stress-related 87
 Signalling pathways 75, 76, 77
 complex intracellular 75
 metabolic insulin 77
 Solid phase extraction (SPE) 9, 13, 17, 25, 27, 35
 Stress 68, 72, 76, 77, 78, 88, 93, 94, 116, 118, 145
 nitrosative 93, 94
 Stroke 119, 142, 146
 angina 119
 nonfatal 142, 146
 Sulfenic acids 94
 Superoxide anions 89, 90, 91, 92, 97, 100
 reactive 89
 Superoxide dismutase 87, 92, 95, 97
 Superoxide radicals 93, 105
 mitochondrial 93
 Superoxides 74, 91, 92, 105
 increased vascular 105
 Sustained hyperglycemia 140
 Symptoms 2, 3, 25, 32, 33, 118
 depressive 32, 33
 extrapyramidal 2
 metabolic 25
 Synthesis 72, 94, 104, 131
 facile 131
 Systemic proinflammatory state 77
 Systems 2, 89, 130, 132, 145
 immune 89
 isotropic disperse 130
 lipid-based sustained-release 132
 renin-angiotensin 145
 sympathetic nervous 2

T

Target 69, 121, 123
 organ 121, 123

population 69
Therapeutic armamentarium 147
Therapies 2, 3, 4, 10, 16, 19, 28, 74, 117, 126,
133, 138, 139
antidiabetic 138
anti-diabetic 117
antipsychotic 3, 4, 28
effective 16
efficient diabetes 133
Thermo 131, 132
gel formulation 132
-reversible sol-gel transition 131
Thioredoxin reductase (TR) 95
Thrombolysis 146
in myocardial infarction (TIMI) 146
Thylolanzapine plasma level ratio 4
Thyroid cancer 139
Tissue damage 97, 101
restricting free radical-induced 97
Tocopherols 99, 100
Tourette's disorder 10
Toxicity 4, 97, 107, 120, 129, 130, 132
cellular 97
hepatic 130
renal 129
Transaminases 24, 33
Tricyclic antidepressants 5
Triglycerides 7, 11, 12, 13, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24,
28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34
decreased blood 7
Trypanosomes 94
Trypanothione 94
Tumor necrosis factor (TNF) 104

U

Unfolded protein response (UPR) 68, 76
Urinary tract infections (UTIs) 144
Urination, frequent 118
Urine 14, 15, 106, 138, 139, 140, 144
F2-isoprostanes 106
volume 144
UV methods 30

V

Vascular 72, 74, 103
blockage 103
health 103

homeostasis 103
reactivity 72
response 74
Vascular dysfunction 73, 77, 78, 94, 98
stress-associated 77
Vasculature 67, 88
placental 67
Vasodilation 77, 93
lower insulin-induced 77
Vasodilators 103, 104
Vessels umbilical vein 75
Visceral 2, 138, 146
adipose tissue deposition 138, 146
obesity 2
Vitamin 87, 95, 99, 100, 103, 105, 106, 107
antioxidants 99, 103
supplements 99
VLDL and total cholesterol 23, 28
Vulvovaginitis 144

W

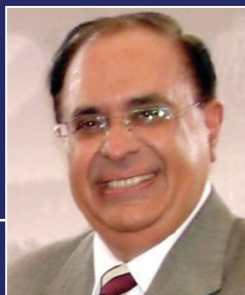
World health organization (WHO) 2, 3, 116,
117, 120, 138

X

Xanthine oxidase catalyses 92
Xenobiotic processes 90

Z

Ziprasidone 7, 8, 11, 12, 17, 18, 23, 24, 26,
29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35
monotherapy 34
-treated cohorts 23, 33
treatment 32



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