Saxagliptin and Alogliptin – New Warnings

- On April 5, 2016, the FDA announced that type 2 diabetes medicines containing AstraZeneca’s saxagliptin and Takeda’s alogliptin may increase the risk of heart failure, particularly in patients who already have heart or kidney disease. Consequently, the FDA has added new warnings to the Warnings and Precautions section of the drug labels regarding this safety issue.
  - Currently available saxagliptin and alogliptin products include: Onglyza® (saxagliptin), Kombiglyze® XR (saxagliptin/metformin extended-release), Nesina® (alogliptin), Kazano™ (alogliptin/metformin), and Oseni™ (alogliptin/pioglitazone).

- Saxagliptin and alogliptin are dipeptidyl peptidase-4 (DPP-4) inhibitors, both indicated as an adjunct to diet and exercise to improve glycemic control in adults with type 2 diabetes mellitus.
  - Saxagliptin and alogliptin should not be used for the treatment of type 1 diabetes mellitus or diabetic ketoacidosis.
  - Oseni should be used with caution in patients with liver disease.

- The safety update is based on two large cardiovascular outcomes trials (CVOT) conducted in patients with heart disease.
  - These clinical trials were also discussed at the FDA Endocrinologic and Metabolic Drugs Advisory Committee meeting in April 2015.
  - In both trials, it was noted that more patients who received saxagliptin- or alogliptin-containing medications were hospitalized for heart failure compared with placebo.
  - In the saxagliptin trial, 3.5% of patients who received saxagliptin were hospitalized for heart failure vs. 2.8% of patients who received placebo.
  - In the alogliptin trial, 3.9% of patients treated with alogliptin were hospitalized for heart failure vs. 3.3% of patients who received placebo.

- Patients should be informed of the signs of heart failure and should talk to their healthcare professional if they experience symptoms such as unusual shortness of breath during daily activities; trouble breathing when lying down; tiredness, weakness, or fatigue; and weight gain with swelling in the ankles, feet, legs or stomach.

- Patients should not stop taking their medicine without first talking to their healthcare professional.

- Healthcare providers should consider discontinuing medications containing saxagliptin and alogliptin in patients who develop heart failure and monitor their blood sugar. If a patient’s blood sugar is not well-controlled with their current treatment, other diabetes medications may be required.