Saxagliptin protects against diabetic nephropathy by inhibiting caspase 3/PARP-1-dependent nephrocyte apoptosis

XIAOWEI XING1, SHUANG GUO2, YUSHENG LIU1, JIANGYING KUANG1, ZHIWEI HUANG3, XIN WANG1 and QINGHUA LU1

Departments of 1Cardiology and 2Gastroenterology, The Second Hospital, Cheeloo College of Medicine, Shandong University; 3Department of Hematology, The Qilu Children's Hospital of Shandong University, Jinan, Shandong 250033, P.R. China

Received June 25, 2019; Accepted June 8, 2021

DOI: 10.3892/etm.2021.10422

Correspondence to: Professor Qinghua Lu or Professor Xin Wang, Department of Cardiology, The Second Hospital, Cheeloo College of Medicine, Shandong University, 247 Beiyuan Big Avenue, Jinan, Shandong 250033, P.R. China
E-mail: luqinghua126@yeah.net; happy97101@126.com

Key words: saxagliptin, caspase 3, PARP-1, diabetic nephropathy, apoptosis

Abstract. Saxagliptin (SAX) can protect against tissue damage caused by diabetic nephropathy. However, whether this compound can restore kidney function, and its specific mechanism of action remain unclear. The present study explored the therapeutic effects and mechanisms of SAX. Male Wistar rats (8 weeks old) were randomly divided into the following groups: A control group (n=10); a group with streptozocin-induced diabetes mellitus (DM) treated with saline (n=20); and a group with streptozocin-induced DM treated with SAX (n=20). Following 20 weeks of treatment, renal function and the extent of renal damage were assessed based on histological staining using hematoxylin and eosin, periodic acid-Schiff and Masson's trichrome staining. The experimental results indicated that Streptozocin induction of DM led to thicker basement membranes in mesangial cells and a more abundant extracellular matrix. These changes were ameliorated following treatment with SAX. The data demonstrated that renal tissue and renal cell apoptosis were ameliorated significantly following treatment with SAX. Furthermore, the expression levels of the apoptotic genes poly (ADP-ribose) polymerase-1 (PARP-1) and caspase 3 were significantly decreased following treatment with SAX. Therefore, SAX may reduce the extent of renal apoptosis and pathological outcomes in diabetic nephropathy by downregulating the expression of caspase 3 and PARP-1 in the death receptor pathway of apoptosis.

Introduction

Diabetes can cause various complications, including diabetic nephropathy (1,2), which can result in end-stage renal disease, and requires kidney dialysis or transplant (3-5). Diabetic nephropathy is characterized by glomerular basement membrane thickening and glomerular or tubulointerstitial sclerosis (5). The latter is further characterized by fibrosis in its final stage, and its progression is similar to other progressive kidney diseases (6).

The apoptotic process serves as an important role in the progression of diabetic nephropathy due to production of reactive oxygen species induced by glucose (7-11). Apoptosis is accompanied by the activation of caspase 3 leading to DNA fragmentation and cleavage of protein substrates, including the DNA repair enzyme poly (ADP-ribose) polymerase-1 (PARP-1). PARP-1 serves as an essential role in diabetes and diabetic complications (12). PARP-1 inhibition or deficiency ameliorates nephropathy in db/db-/- mice with type 2 diabetes (13) and in streptozocin-induced diabetic nephropathy (14). High glucose (HG) levels or hyperglycemia cause activation of the Bcl2/caspase/PARP signaling pathway and stimulates the induction of apoptosis, primarily in proximal tubular cells (15-17).

Dipeptidyl peptidase-4 (DPP-4) is an enzyme that is abundantly expressed in the intestines, kidney, brain, heart and other tissues, and is further activated in diabetic animal models (6,18). As the kidneys contain the highest levels of DPP-4 within the body, which quickly degrade natural glucagon-like peptide (GLP-1), DPP-4 contributes to diabetic nephropathy. This aggravates proteinuria, glomerulosclerosis, and tubulointerstitial fibrosis as a result (19). DPP-4 inhibitors have been shown to improve brain function by reducing mitochondrial dysfunction, insulin resistance, inflammation and apoptosis (20). Treatment with vildagliptin and metformin resulted in the maintenance of the Mini-Mental State Examination score, thus showing a protective role on cognitive functioning compared with treatment with metformin alone (20). DPP-4 inhibition has extrapancreatic protective effects against diet-induced adipose tissue inflammation and hepatic steatosis (21,22). The DPP-4 inhibitor linagliptin increases GLP-1 activity and attenuates oxidative stress-related...
glomerulopathy (23). Combined treatment with linagliptin and inhibitors of the renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system reduces renal dysfunction in type 2 diabetes (24). Other DPP-4 inhibitors have also demonstrated protective effects against diabetic nephropathy, including sitagliptin (25) and gemigliptin, which exert anti-apoptotic effects (26).

The DPP-4 inhibitor saxagliptin (SAX) has been used for the treatment of renal, heart, pancreatic and retinal disorders (27-29). Therefore, the present study investigated whether SAX could exert therapeutic effects on the kidney tissues of a rat model of streptozocin-induced diabetes and whether these effects were accompanied by inhibition of apoposis.

Materials and methods

Animals. All animal protocols were reviewed and approved by the Animal Care and Use Committee of Shandong University. For the animal experiments, 8-week old male Wistar rats were purchased from the Experimental Animal Center of Shandong University and maintained with a 12-h day/night cycle. Following 1 week of acclimatization, the animals were randomly allocated into a control group (n=10), a diabetes mellitus group (DM) (n=20), or a DM + SAX group (DM + SAX) (n=20). DM was induced in the latter two groups via intraperitoneal injection of 65 mg/kg streptozocin (Sigma-Aldrich; Merck KGaA) solution dissolved in citric acid buffer (30). The diagnosis of diabetes was based on a blood glucose level measurement >16.7 mmol/l. Following induction of diabetes, mice were monitored for 1 week, and subsequently the control and DM animals were provided saline, whereas the DM + SAX animals were administered SAX (1 mg/kg per day) by gavage. Prior to administration, SAX was prepared in a mortar and dissolved in saline. Following 20 weeks of feeding, the DM + SAX animals were administered SAX (1 mg/kg per day) by gavage. Prior to administration, SAX was prepared in a mortar and dissolved in saline.

H&E staining. The tissues were fixed in 10% phosphate-buffered formalin solution for 24 h at room temperature, embedded in paraffin and sectioned at a thickness of 4 µm (liver) or 6 µm (kidney). The tissue sections were then deparaffinized for 30 min at room temperature and stained with H&E for 5 min at room temperature.

Cell culture. HK2 cells were cultured in RPMI-1640 (Gibco; Thermo Fisher Scientific, Inc.) containing 11.2 mmol/l glucose and 2 mmol/l L-glutamine at 37°C with 5% CO2. The media was supplemented with 10% FBS (HyClone; Cytiva), 100 unit/ml penicillin (Gibco; Thermo Fisher Scientific, Inc.) and 100 µg/ml streptomycin (Gibco; Thermo Fisher Scientific, Inc.). HK2 cells were plated in 6-well plates 1 day before use.

Hoehst 33258 staining. HK2 cells were treated with 40 mM HG, 40 mM HG and 10 µM SAX (HG + SAX), 40 mM HG and 1 mM 3-Aminobenzamide (3-ABA) (HG + 3-ABA) or 40 mM HG, 1 mM 3-ABA and 10 µM SAX (HG + 3-ABA + SAX). The cells were fixed with 4% polyoxyethylene at room temperature for 30 min, washed twice with PBS, incubated with 10 µg/ml Hoehst 33258 (Merck & Company, Inc.) for 5 min at room temperature and washed with PBS three times.

Masson, PAS and Sirius red staining. The kidney tissues were excised, fixed in 4% neutral buffered formalin overnight at 4°C, embedded in paraffin and sectioned at a thickness of 4 µm. Masson, PAS and Sirius red staining were performed according to the manufacturer’s protocols, and imaged at x20 magnification using a light microscope.

Immunohistochemistry. Tissue sections were blocked using 5% Donkey serum (cat. no. SL050; Beijing Solarbio Science & Technology Co., Ltd.; diluted in PBS) for 30 min at 4°C, and incubated with antibodies against caspase 3 (1:100), PARP-1 (1:100), or β-actin (1:200) overnight at 4°C, the antibodies were diluted using Primary Antibody Dilution Buffer (cat. no. AB64211; Abcam). The slides were washed 3 times with PBS, and incubated with the corresponding secondary antibody (1:500; cat. no. A0208; Beyotime Institute of Biotechnology) and treated with a streptavidin derivative coupled to alkaline phosphatase (cat. no. 21324; Thermo Fisher Scientific, Inc.). The sections were stained with DAB chromogen A for 5 min at room temperature (cat. no. P0203; Beyotime Institute of Biotechnology). Subsequently, the slides were examined at x20 magnification using an Olympus BX-UCB light microscope.
Experimential and Therapeutic Medicine 22: 990, 2021

Flow cytometry. To detect the induction of apoptosis, treated HK2 cells were washed twice with cold PBS, incubated with 10 µg/ml Annexin V‑FITC (BD) for 15 min at room temperature, and subsequently propidium iodide (PI; 10 µl) was added and incubated for 5 min at room temperature. The samples were analyzed using CytoFlex software (version 2.0; Beckman Coulter, Inc.).

Western blotting. Tissues and cells were lysed using RIPA lysis buffer [150 mM NaCl, 1% NP‑40, 0.1% SDS, 0.5% deoxycholic sodium salt, 50 mM Tris HCl (pH 7.4), 2 mM EDTA, 2 mM Na3VO4, 10 mM NaF and one tablet of Roche Complete inhibitor cocktail (Roche Diagnostics) per 30 ml]. The protein concentration was measured using a BCA protein assay kit. Equal amounts of protein (50 µg) from each sample were separated on a 10% Nupage gel, transferred to the nitrocellulose membranes and immunoblotted with primary antibodies overnight at 4˚C. All the primary antibodies were used at a 1:1,000 dilution (antibody: Dilution buffer). The membranes were washed with Tris-buffered saline containing Tween‑20 (0.15%, TBS‑T), incubated with horseradish peroxidase‑conjugated secondary antibody (1:5,000) for 2 h at room temperature, and washed 3 times with TBS‑T. The blots were visualized using Enhanced Chemiluminescence Plus reagent (EMD Millipore) and imaged using a GE gel imaging AI600 (Amersham Imager 600; GE Healthcare).

Statistical analysis. Experiments were repeated at least three times and similar results were obtained. Quantitative results are expressed as the mean ± the standard error of the mean. The differences between two groups were evaluated using a Student's t-test, and comparisons between multiple groups were performed using a one-way ANOVA followed by Bonferroni's correction. P<0.05 was considered to indicate a statistically significant difference.

Results

SAX partially reverses DM-associated weight loss and renal hypertrophy. The weights of the mice in each group did not differ significantly at the start of the study or when the animals were 10 weeks old (data not shown). At the 30-week-old period, DM animals exhibited a 43.6% lower weight compared with the control animals (P<0.01). This weight loss was reversed (by 18.6%) in the DM + SAX group compared with DM animals (Fig. 1A).

At the start of the study, all three animal groups exhibited similar renal weights and similar values in the renal hypertrophy index (data not shown). At 30 weeks, the DM group exhibited a 19.7% increase in renal weight and a 84.6% higher renal hypertrophy index compared with those of the control group (both P<0.01), and these increases were reversed (by 5.71 and 20.2% in the DM + SAX group compared with DM animals; Fig. 1B and C). These results suggested that SAX could protect against DM-induced weight loss and renal hypertrophy.

SAX decreases glucose levels in diabetic rats. At the beginning of the study, the three animal groups exhibited similar blood glucose levels (data not shown). At 30 weeks of age, DM animals had significantly higher blood glucose levels compared with the control animals (Fig. 2A). DM + SAX animals had significantly lower blood glucose levels compared with the DM animals (Fig. 2A). These results suggested that SAX reduced glucose levels in diabetic animals.

SAX improves kidney function in diabetic rats. Kidney function of DM rats in the presence or absence of SAX was assessed based on the blood urea nitrogen (BUN) levels, serum creatinine (Scr) levels and urinary albumin excretion rate. The levels of all three indices were significantly higher in the DM group compared with those observed in the control group (P<0.05), whereas they were significantly lower in the DM + SAX group compared with the DM group (Fig. 2B-D). These results suggest that SAX improves kidney function in diabetes.

SAX reduces kidney lesions in diabetic rats. The tubulointerstitial and glomerular lesions in the three animal groups were analyzed using H&E, Masson's trichrome, PAS and Sirus red staining. At 30 weeks of age, DM rats exhibited mesangial expansion, nodular sclerosis, glomerular atrophy and glomerulosclerosis, whereas these...
pathological conditions were not observed in the control animals (Fig. 3A). DM rats exhibited tubular degeneration, tubular basement membrane irregularity, interstitial fibrosis and tubular atrophy (Figs. 3B-D and S1A-C). Treatment with SAX was associated with a reduced incidence of severe fibrosis and global glomerulosclerosis, a lower number of hyaline cylinders and reduced formation of irregular basement membranes, tubular degeneration, interstitial fibrosis and tubular atrophy compared with the corresponding indices in the DM group (Figs. 3 and S1A-C; P<0.05). These results suggest that SAX reduces the formation and severity of kidney lesions in diabetic animals.

**SAX protects against HG-induced apoptosis.** HG levels have been reported to increase apoptosis in cultured glomerular epithelial cells. Hoechst 33258 staining showed that the induction of HK2 cell apoptosis was caused by HG levels. This effect was reversed with SAX treatment (Fig. 4A and B). Furthermore, flow cytometry analysis confirmed that the induction of HK2 cell apoptosis (Annexin V and PI double-positive cells) was decreased significantly in the SAX treated cells (Fig. 4C and D). These results indicate that SAX ameliorates HK2 cell apoptosis induced by HG.

**SAX protects against kidney injury from DM-induced apoptosis via the caspase 3/PARP-1 pathway.** Since PARP-1 is an important regulator of apoptosis, the expression levels of cleaved-caspase 3, caspase 3, cleaved-PARP-1, PARP-1, Bax and Bcl2 were examined. The induction of DM in the animal models resulted in upregulation of the expression levels of cleaved-caspase 3, caspase 3, cleaved-PARP-1, PARP-1 and the ratio of Bax/Bcl2. In the presence of SAX, this effect
Figure 3. SAX ameliorates kidney lesions in the diabetic animals as detected by (A) H&E, (B) PAS, (C) Masson’s trichrome and (D) Sirus red staining in the NC, DM and DM + SAX treated rats. SAX, saxagliptin; H&E, hematoxylin and eosin; DM, diabetes mellitus; NC, normal control.

Figure 4. SAX ameliorates apoptosis in HG treated HK2 cells. (A) Induction of apoptosis was detected by Hoechst 33258 fluorescent staining in the Con, HG and HG + SAX groups and (B) quantification of Hoechst 33258 fluorescent staining. The red arrows indicate the apoptotic cells. (C) Apoptosis was detected by flow cytometry assays in the Con group, HG group, and the HG + SAX group. (D) Quantification of the Hoechst 33258 fluorescent staining of HK2 cells. *P<0.05. SAX, Saxagliptin; Con, control; HG, high glucose; HG + SAX, high glucose with SAX.
Figure 5. SAX protects the diabetic kidney against apoptotic cell death induced by diabetes and HG. (A) Caspase 3 and PARP-1 protein expression in rats in the NC, DM and DM + SAX groups as determined by immunohistochemistry. (B) Quantification of the expression levels of caspase 3 and PARP-1 protein based on the immunohistochemistry analysis. (C) Expression levels of cleaved-caspase 3, caspase 3, cleaved-PARP-1 and PARP-1 protein detection in the NC, DM, and DM + SAX treated groups were determined by western blot analysis, and (D) quantification of the western blot data. (E) Western blot analysis of cleaved-caspase 3, caspase 3, cleaved-PARP-1 and PARP-1 in the control, HG treated and HG + SAX treated HK2 cells. (F) Densitometry analysis of the western blot data. *P<0.05, **P<0.01, ***P<0.001. SAX, saxagliptin; HG, high glucose; PARP-1, poly (ADP-ribose) polymerase-1; NC, normal control; DM, diabetes mellitus; T2DM, diabetes mellitus type 2; HG + SAX, high glucose with SAX.
was partially reversed (Figs. 5A-D and S2A). Moreover, SAX partially reversed the upregulation of cleaved caspase 3, caspase 3, cleaved-PARP-1, PARP-1 and the ratio of Bax/Bcl2 induced by HG treatment in the HK2 cells (Figs. 5E and F and S2B). 3-ABA inhibited the induction of apoptosis by HG. SAX partially increased the inhibitory effects of 3-ABA on apoptosis in HK2 cells (Fig. 6A-D). These results suggested that SAX inhibited apoptosis via the caspase 3/PARP-1 pathway, and thereby protected the tissues from the effects of diabetic nephropathy.

Discussion

In the present study, SAX was shown to protect against the pathological effects associated with diabetic nephropathy. In the rat model of streptozocin-induced DM, SAX reduced glycemia, tubulointerstitial and glomerular damage, and improved kidney function. These therapeutic changes were associated with downregulation of the expression of apoptotic genes, such as cleaved-caspase 3 and cleaved-PARP-1. Moreover, the present study demonstrated that SAX could downregulate the ratio of Bax/Bcl2. The findings suggested that long-term SAX administration could protect against diabetic nephropathy and provide an explanation of the mechanisms of apoptosis inhibition.

The incidence of diabetic nephropathy is continuously increasing (31,32) and is considered to be the primary cause of chronic kidney disease and end-stage renal failure (33). Diabetic nephropathy is a chronic, complex disease that gradually leads to glomerular hypertrophy, glomerular basement membrane thickening, collagen deposition, interstitial fibrosis aggravation, renal tubular atrophy and renal function disorder (34,35). HG alters the microenvironment of each cell, and in turn leads to the activation of the apoptotic pathway (10,36).

By inhibiting DPP-4 and slowing down GLP-1 degradation, SAX can partially reverse the reduction in the incretin effect in the absence of hypoglycemia (37). SAX can correct glucose metabolism disorders and prevent kidney injury (38). Its cytoprotective effects have been noted on several types of cells, including cells in the pancreas, heart and retina (39). The present study identified a novel mechanism by which SAX could restore existing kidney dysfunction. SAX significantly decreased the DM-induced increase in weight and kidney hypertrophy. It also ameliorated DM-induced structural kidney injury and fibrosis, as shown by H&E staining of tissue slices, and it reduced DM-induced glycogen accumulation in the kidney. The results provide a plausible explanation by which these beneficial alterations are mediated; downregulation of the expression of the pro-apoptotic proteins. In the rat model used, DM increased the expression of caspase 3, which cleaved PARP-1, causing DNA damage and loss of DNA repair ability (40,41); SAX partially reversed these effects. Similarly, the DPP-4 inhibitor linagliptin ameliorated DM-induced kidney damage by inhibiting apoptosis (5).

In conclusion, the results showed that SAX could improve kidney function in diabetic rats in part by down-regulating caspase 3 expression and thereby inhibiting the pro-apoptotic cleavage of PARP-1. The results are in agreement with those reported in previous studies assessing the effects of SAX. This compound may thus serve as a...
promising renoprotective therapy against the development and progression of diabetic nephropathy and may serve as a novel therapeutic option for the prevention and treatment of diabetic nephropathy.

Acknowledgements

Not applicable.

Funding

This work was supported by the Youth Fund of the Second Hospital of Shandong University (grant no. Y2013010015), PhD Foundation of Shandong Natural Science Foundation (grant no. ZR2018BH010), Key Research and Development Project in Shandong (grant no. 2017G006027), Shandong Medical and Health Science and Technology Development Program Project (grant no. 2013WS0243), Shandong Provincial Natural Science Foundation (grant no. ZR2016HP01) and China Postdoctoral Science Foundation (grant no. 2018M642673).

Availability of data and materials

The datasets used and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Authors’ contributions

XX, XW and QL designed and performed experiments, and wrote the manuscript. SG, YL, JK and ZH performed the experiments. XW and QL confirm the authenticity of all the raw data. XX, JK, XW and QL acquired, analyzed and interpreted the data and were involved in writing, reviewing and editing the manuscript, as well as supervision. All authors have read and approved the final manuscript.

Ethics approval and consent to participate

All animal protocols were reviewed and approved by the Animal Care and Use Committee of Shandong University.

Patient consent for publication

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

References

1. Giacco F and Brownlee M: Oxidative stress and diabetic complications. Circ Res 107: 1058-1070, 2010.
2. Reidy K, Kang HM, Hostetter T and Susztak K: Molecular mechanisms of diabetic kidney disease. J Clin Invest 124: 2333-2340, 2014.
3. Lindblom R, Higgins G, Coughlan M and de Haan JB: Targeting mitochondria and reactive oxygen species-driven pathogenesis in diabetic nephropathy. Rev Diabet Stud 12: 134-156, 2015.
4. Dai H, Liu Q and Liu B: Research progress on mechanism of podocyte depletion in diabetic nephropathy. J Diabetes Res 2017: 2615286, 2017.
5. Marques C, Mega C, Goncalves A, Rodrigues-Santos P, Teixeira-Lemos E, Teixeira F, Fontes-Ribeiro C, Reis F and Fernandes R: Sitagliptin prevents inflammation and apoptotic cell death in the kidney of type 2 diabetic animals. Mediators Inflamm 2014: 538737, 2014.
6. Kasakani K, Shi S, Kasakani M, He J, Nagai T, Nakamura Y, Ishigaki Y, Kitada M, Srimavastva SP and Koya D: Linagliptin-mediated DPP-4 inhibition ameliorates kidney fibrosis in streptozotocin-induced diabetic mice by inhibiting endothelial-to-mesenchymal transition in a therapeutic regimen. Diabetes 63: 2120-2131, 2014.
7. Rivero A, Mora C, Muros M, García J, Herrera H and Navarrogonzález JF: Pathogenic perspectives for the role of inflammation in diabetic nephropathy. Clin Sci (Lond) 116: 479-492, 2009.
8. Sanchez-Niño MD, Benito-Martín A and Ortiz A: New paradigms in cell death in human diabetic nephropathy. Kidney Int 78: 737-744, 2010.
9. Wagener FA, Dekker D, Berden JH, Scharstuhl A and van der Vlag J: The role of reactive oxygen species in apoptosis of the diabetic kidney. Apoptosis 14: 1451-1458, 2009.
10. Volpe CMO, Villal-Delfino PH, Dos Anjos PMF and Nogueira-Machado JA: Cellular death, reactive oxygen species (ROS) and diabetic complications. Cell Death Dis 9: 119, 2018.
11. Ma Y, Chen F, Yang S, Chen B and Shi J: Protocatechueic acid ameliorates high glucose-induced extracellular matrix accumulation in diabetic nephropathy. Biomed Pharmacother 98: 18-22, 2018.
12. Gray SP and Jandeleit-Dahm K: The pathobiology of diabetic vascular complications-cardiovascular and kidney disease. J Mol Med (Berl) 92: 441-452, 2014.
13. Szabó C, Biser A, Benko R, Böttinger E and Suszták K: Poly(ADP-ribose) polymerase inhibitors ameliorate nephropathy of type 2 diabetic Leprdb/db mice. Diabetes 55: 3004-3012, 2006.
14. Shevalye H, Maksimchyk Y, Watcho P and Obrosova IG: Poly(ADP-ribose) polymerase-1 (PARP-1) gene deficiency alleviates diabetic kidney disease. Biochim Biophys Acta 1802: 1020-1027, 2010.
15. Chao LK, Chang WT, Shih YW and Huang JS: Cinnamaldehyde impairs high glucose-induced hypertrophy in renal interstitial fibroblasts. Toxicol Appl Pharmacol 244: 174-180, 2010.
16. Lau GJ, Godin N, Maachi H, Lo CS, Wu SJ, Zhu JX, Volpe CMO, Villar-Delfino PH, Dos Anjos PMF and Nistala R, Habibi J, Aroor A, Sowers JR, Hayden MR, Nistala R, Habibi J, Aroor A, Sowers JR, Hayden MR: DPP4 inhibition in a mouse model of type-2 diabetic nephropathy. J Hypertens 32: 2211-2223, 2014.
17. Covington MD and Schnellmann RG: Chronic high glucose downregulates mitochondrial cytochrome c10 and contributes to renal cell death and diabetes-induced renal injury. Kidney Int 81: 391-400, 2012.
18. Shkarovska Y, Reichetzeder C, Alter M, Tsyprykov O, Ballestar S, Secher T, Klein T and Hocher B: Blood pressure impairment in high glucose-induced hypertrophy in renal interstitial fibroblasts. Toxicol Appl Pharmacol 244: 174-180, 2010.
19. Borski AM, Condorelli G, Biondi F, Vicari ESD, Buscemi C, Luca S and Vacante M: Effects of vildagliptin, a DPP-4 inhibitor, in elderly diabetic patients with mild cognitive impairment. Arch Gerontol Geriatr 84: 103896, 2019.
20. Shi S, Koya D and Kasakani K: Dipeptidyl peptidase-4 and kidney fibrosis in diabetes. Fibrogenesis Tissue Repair 9: 1, 2016.
21. Itou M, Kawai T, Taniguchi E and Sata M: Dipeptidyl peptidase-4: A key player in chronic liver disease. World J Gastroenterol 19: 2298-2306, 2013.
22. Shirakawa J, Fujii H, Ohnuma K, Sato K, Ito Y, Kaji M, Ishigaki Y, Koganei M, Sasaki H, Nagashima Y, et al: Diet-induced adipose tissue inflammation and liver steatosis are prevented by DPP-4 inhibition in diabetic mice. Diabetes 60: 1246-1257, 2011.
23. Nistala R, Habibi J, Aroor A, Sowers JR, Hayden MR, Meuth A, Knight W, Hancock T, Klein T, Demarco VG and Whaley-Connell A: DPP4 inhibition attenuates filtration barrier injury and oxidant stress in the Zucker obese rat. Obesity (Silver Spring) 22: 2172-2179, 2014.
24. Groop PH, Cooper ME, Perkovic V, Emser A, Woerle HJ and Feymann M: Linagliptin lowers albuminuria on top of recommended standard treatment in patients with type 2 diabetes and renal dysfunction. Diabetes Care 36: 3460-3468, 2013.
25. Ommen ES, Xu L, O’Neill EA, Goldstein BJ, Kaufman KD and Engel SS: Comparison of treatment with sitagliptin or sulfonylurea in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus and mild renal impairment: A post hoc analysis of clinical trials. Diabetes Ther 6: 29-40, 2015.

26. Lim S, Han KA, Yu J, Chaman P, Kim ES, Yoon KH, Kwon S, Moon MK, Lee KW, Kim DJ, et al: Efficacy and safety of initial combination therapy with gemigliptin and metformin compared with monotherapy with either drug in patients with type 2 diabetes: A double-blind randomized controlled trial (INICOM study). Diabetes Obes Metab 19: 87-97, 2017.

27. Hardy G: Saxagliptin demonstrates no increased risk for cardiovascular death, heart attack or stroke in the SAVOR cardiovascular outcomes trial. Cardiovasc J Afr 24: 290, 2013.

28. Ott C, Raff U, Schmidt S, Kistner I, Friedrich S, Bramlage P, Harazny JM and Schmieder RE: Effects of saxagliptin on early microvascular changes in patients with type 2 diabetes. Cardiovasc Diabetol 13: 19, 2014.

29. Roy D, Chadwick KD, Tatarkiewicz K, LaCerte C, Bergholm AM, Brodie T, Mangipudy RS, Parkes D, Graziano MJ and Reilly TP: The glucagon-like peptide-1-based therapeutics exenatide and saxagliptin did not cause detrimental effects on the pancreas in mice, rats, dogs and monkeys. Diabetes Obes Metab 16: 910‑921, 2014.

30. Lee TI, Kao YH, Tsai WC, Chung CC, Chen YC and Chen YJ: HDAC inhibition modulates cardiac PPARs and fatty acid metabolism in diabetic cardiomyopathy. PPAR Res 2016: 5938740, 2016.

31. Bae EJ: DPP‑4 inhibitors in diabetic complications: Role of DPP‑4 beyond glucose control. Arch Pharm Res 39: 1114-1128, 2016.

32. Xiao T, Guan X, Nie L, Wang S, Sun L, He T, Huang Y, Zhang J, Yang K, Wang J and Zhao J: Rapamycin promotes podocyte autophagy and ameliorates renal injury in diabetic mice. Mol Cell Biochem 394: 145-154, 2014.

33. Lv M, Chen Z, Hu G and Li Q: Therapeutic strategies of diabetic nephropathy: Recent progress and future perspectives. Drug Discov Today 20: 332-346, 2015.

34. Jefferson IA, Shankland SJ and Pichler RH: Proteinuria in diabetic kidney disease: A mechanistic viewpoint. Kidney Int 74: 22-36, 2008.

35. Flyvbjerg A: The role of the complement system in diabetic nephropathy. Nat Rev Nephrol 13: 311‑318, 2017.

36. Xiao L, Wang M, Yang S, Liu F and Sun L: A glimpse of the pathogenetic mechanisms of Wnt/β-catenin signaling in diabetic nephropathy. Biomed Res Int 2013: 987064, 2013.

37. Schernthaner G, Durán-García S, Hanefeld M, Langslet G, Niskanen L, Östgren CJ, Malvolti E and Hardy E: Efficacy and tolerability of saxagliptin compared with glimepiride in elderly patients with type 2 diabetes: A randomized, controlled study (GENERATION). Diabetes Obes Metab 17: 630‑638, 2015.

38. Scheen AJ: DPP‑4 inhibitors in the management of type 2 diabetes: A critical review of head-to-head trials. Diabetes Metab 38: 89-101, 2012.

39. Cai Y, Lydic TA, Turkette T, Reid GE and Olson LK: Impact of alogliptin and pioglitazone on lipid metabolism in islets of prediabetic and diabetic zucker diabetic fatty rats. Biochem Pharmacol 95: 46-57, 2015.

40. Verzola D, Bertolotto MB, Villaggio B, Ottonello L, Dallegri F, Frumento G, Berruti V, Gandolfo MT, Garibotto G and Deferrari G: Taurine prevents apoptosis induced by high ambient glucose in human tubule renal cells. J Investig Med 50: 443-451, 2002.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) License.