



GLP-1 Drugs for Weight Loss and Diabetes

While glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) drugs were traditionally used to treat diabetes, they are now in demand for weight loss. They can also be used to prevent heart attacks or strokes for adults with heart disease.



A recent KFF poll found that **12%** of adults have taken a GLP-1 drug at some point, including **6%** who are currently taking such a drug.

With a growing list of available GLP-1s, it can be confusing to understand their differences. The following charts break down these drugs by active ingredients, brand names and approved uses of popular GLP-1 medications.

Active Ingredient: **Semaglutide**

Semaglutide mimics the GLP-1 hormone, which is released in the gut when eating. GLP-1 prompts the body to produce more insulin, reducing blood sugar.

Brand Name	Form	Strength	Approved Uses
Ozempic	Injection pen	2 mg/3 mL 4 mg/3 mL 8 mg/3 mL	Type 2 diabetes Cardiovascular risk reduction
Rybelsus	Oral tablet	3 mg 7 mg 14 mg	Type 2 diabetes
Wegovy	Injection pen	0.25 mg/0.5 mL 0.5 mg/0.5 mL 1 mg/0.5 mL 1.7 mg/0.75 mL 2.4 mg/0.75 mL	Weight management Cardiovascular risk reduction

Active Ingredient: **Liraglutide**

Liraglutide is similar to semaglutide in that it mimics GLP-1.

Brand Name	Form	Strength	Approved Uses
Byetta	Injection pen	5 mcg 10 mcg	Type 2 diabetes
Saxenda	Injection pen	0.6 mg 1.2 mg 1.8 mg 2.4 mg 3 mg	Weight management

These are just a few of the most popular active ingredients and brand names. Other GLP-1s available on the market include dulaglutide, exenatide, liraglutide and lixisenatide.

Active Ingredient: **Tirzepatide**

While semaglutide and liraglutide mimic one hormone, tirzepatide mimics two. Tirzepatide is a dual glucose-dependent insulinotropic polypeptide (GIP)/GLP-1 receptor agonist. GIP also stimulates meal-time insulin secretion.

Brand Name	Form	Strength	Approved Uses
Mounjaro	Injection pen	2.5 mg/0.5 mL 5 mg/0.5 mL 7.5 mg/0.5 mL 10 mg/0.5 mL 12.5 mg/0.5 mL 15 mg/0.5 mL	Type 2 diabetes
Zepbound	Injection pen	2.5 mg/0.5 mL 5 mg/0.5 mL 7.5 mg/0.5 mL 10 mg/0.5 mL 12.5 mg/0.5 mL 15 mg/0.5 mL	Weight management

All forms and strengths of these drugs are meant to be used as long-term treatments for their approved uses. Keep in mind that diet and exercise changes are often combined with these medications to enhance their health benefits.

Coverage for weight loss and diabetes prescriptions will vary by health plan. Talk to your doctor if you have any questions about GLP-1 drugs.