

## Weight Loss

Excess body weight is more than a cosmetic concern. Patients who are obese are at a much higher risk for several serious health problems. If you struggle to lose weight, the team Vanderbilt Wellness can help you achieve your weight-loss goals and keep your body weight under control. To get started on your weight-loss plan, call the office today.

## Weight Loss Q & A

### What causes obesity?

Patients are diagnosed with obesity when they reach a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or higher. BMI compares your height and weight to determine if you're underweight, at a normal weight, overweight, or obese. A healthy BMI is between 18.5 to 24.9. Although BMI is an estimate, it provides a reasonable measurement of how much excess weight you carry.

Put simply, the cause of obesity is consuming more calories than your body can use. Although genetics can influence your body weight, the main contributors to obesity are lifestyle-oriented. They include:

- High-calorie beverages
- Unhealthy diet
- Oversized portions
- Inactivity

Obesity often impacts an entire family. Although genetics can impact how efficiently your body burns calories and regulates your appetite, they aren't exactly causes of obesity. Families often share the same eating and exercise habits, which are major contributors to excess body weight.

Certain medications and conditions can also lead to weight gain and obesity. If you take medication or have a condition that interferes with your weight loss, the Vanderbilt Wellness Team can help you lose weight safely and effectively.

# What are the health risks of obesity?

Obesity puts you at risk for a number of serious conditions. Excess weight puts extra stress on your organs, joints, and blood vessels. This excess stress can lead to many conditions, including:

- Osteoarthritis
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Type 2 diabetes
- Sleep apnea
- Heart disease
- Strokes

Obesity can also increase your risk for certain types of cancer, like ovarian, breast, colon, rectum, and prostate cancer. Shedding the excess pounds is an easy way to reduce your risk for these conditions and improve your overall health.

# What is a weight-loss plan?

A weight-loss plan is designed to provide you with actionable steps you and your provider take to get your weight under control. A weight-loss plan can take the stress out of losing weight and help you stay on track with a plan that's designed for you.

During your appointment, you and the Vanderbilt Wellness team will discuss your medical history, personal health, and weight-loss goals. Your weight-loss plan is developed based on your individual needs and may include:

- Nutrition counseling
- Exercise plan
- Meal plan

# What is Semaglutide?

A Semaglutide is a GLP-1 (Glucagon Like Peptide). Brand names for this drug are Wegovy, and Ozempic.

Semaglutide is used for the treatment of high blood sugar in Type 2 diabetes and chronic weight management. This medication helps most patients lose excess

weight associated with diabetes or other chronic health problems. Medical guidelines indicate that Obese and overweight patients with a Body Mass Index (BMI)  $\geq 30$  or  $\geq 27$ , respectively, are good candidates for the use of this medication.

Excess weight gain contributes to further health complications such as cardiovascular diseases, high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, depression, sleep disturbance, infertility, etc.

## How does it work/ how long do I take it?

Semaglutide is a GLP-1 (Glucagon Like Peptide) that helps patients lose weight by **increasing the amount of insulin produced by the pancreas and decreasing the amount of glucagon produced by the liver**. This combination results in reduced hunger and increased energy levels, leading to weight loss.

Patients can start feeling the effects of the Semaglutide with the first dose and should start experiencing weight loss **within the first two weeks** of your program, but the optimal weight loss dose may take some time to ramp up to as shown below.

Your provider will work with you to help manage your weight loss and how long you continue to take a GLP-1 Receptor Agonist, but as long as you aren't experiencing any adverse effects, it's likely that you will be able to stay on it for **as long as you need to**.

## Who should not take semaglutide?

You should **NOT** take semaglutide if:

- you previously experienced hypersensitivity to semaglutide or any component of the formulation.
- if you or any of your family members have a history of Medullary Thyroid Carcinoma (MTC).
- if ever diagnosed with multiple endocrine neoplasia syndrome type 2 (MEN2).

## Possible common side effects

- Abdominal pain
- Nausea
- Constipation
- Injection site reaction
- Fatigue
- Dizziness

- Heart burn.

**Less common serious side effects: \*\*Please call your provider if you experience any serious side effects\*\***

Severe low blood sugar, change in vision, kidney problems, inflammation of pancreas, depression and suicidal thinking, and gallbladder issues.

To learn how the Vanderbilt Wellness team can help you get your weight under control, book an appointment by phone today 336-817-9268.