

How They Work

Semaglutide and Tirzepatide, sometimes referred to as GLP-1 receptor agonists, are medications used in the management of Type 2 Diabetes and Obesity. They work by mimicking a natural hormone in the body called GLP-1 (glucagon-like peptide-1).

When you eat, your natural GLP-1 hormone is released into the bloodstream and:

- Reduces feelings of hunger, making you feel full and satisfied, by traveling to the hypothalamus and activating receptors in the brain.
- Slows the movement of food through the stomach, delaying gastric emptying. As a result, food remains in your stomach longer, helping you feel full for an extended period.
- Helps to control blood sugar levels by directing the pancreas to release insulin.

When your natural GLP-1 isn't functioning effectively, medications like Semaglutide and Tirzepatide can help by regulating hunger, satiety, and blood sugar levels. These medications mimic the GLP-1 hormone in your body, activating its receptors to enhance its effects.

Nutritional Considerations

Balanced nutrition, an important part of your journey with Semaglutide or Tirzepatide, can help reduce hunger, control blood sugar, prevent nutrient deficiencies, and manage side effects.

Protein: Protein helps your body build and repair muscle, keeps you feeling full, stabilizes blood sugar levels, and supports your energy needs. Aim for 0.7–1.0 gram of protein per pound of ideal body weight (or approximately 30 grams per meal).



Fiber: Fiber promotes feelings of fullness, supports healthy digestion, and helps prevent constipation, a common side effect of Semaglutide and Tirzepatide. Daily fiber recommendations are 25 grams for women and 38 grams for men.



Micronutrients: Semaglutide and Tirzepatide slow the movement of food from the stomach to the intestines, which can impact the absorption of key micronutrients like calcium, iron, and vitamin D. To support optimal nutrient levels, include foods rich in these essential micronutrients in your meals and snacks.



Water: Water supports digestion, aids in nutrient absorption, and helps you maintain energy. Aim to drink 8 glasses (64 ounces) of water daily to stay hydrated.



Preventing Muscle Loss

Those taking Semaglutide or Tirzepatide are at risk for losing muscle mass.

These medications suppress hunger and enhance feelings of fullness, resulting in lower food intake. When calorie consumption decreases, especially during rapid weight loss, the body may begin to break down muscle tissue for energy. Additionally, a reduced appetite can make it challenging to consume enough protein, which is crucial for maintaining muscle mass.

Key Strategies to Protect Muscle Mass:

- Ensure you eat enough protein (0.7-1.0 g/lb ideal body weight) to support muscle growth and repair.
- Incorporate resistance exercises (2-3 times per week) to keep muscles active and prevent muscle breakdown.



Managing Side Effects

By slowing the movement of food from the stomach to the intestines, Semaglutide and Tirzepatide can lead to side effects such as nausea and constipation. These medications may also cause rapid emptying of the intestines in some individuals, which can lead to diarrhea.

Fortunately, there are nutritional strategies to manage these side effects.

Nausea:

- Small, frequent meals: Eat smaller portions more often to reduce nausea.
- Ginger tea: Ginger has been shown to help settle the stomach.
- Cold foods: Cold foods are often easier to tolerate than hot foods.



Constipation:

- Hydrate: Drink 8-10 glasses of water daily.
- Increase fiber slowly: Include more whole grains, fruit, veggies, nuts, seeds.



Diarrhea:

- Stay hydrated: Drink fluids with electrolytes to replace lost minerals.
- Eat bland foods: Stick to easily digestible options like bananas and rice.



Six Pillars for GLP-1 Medications

Long-Term Habits

Building sustainable habits can help you achieve long-term success with Semaglutide or Tirzepatide:

- **Meal Prep:** Having meals prepped in advance makes it easier to maintain healthy eating habits.
- **Consistent Meal Times:** Regular meals help stabilize blood sugar, improve digestion, and control appetite.
- **Building a Balanced Plate:** Balanced meals help prevent weight regain and provide the essential nutrients your body needs.
- **Mindful Eating:** Focus fully on the eating experience, savoring the flavors, textures, and how your body feels with each bite.

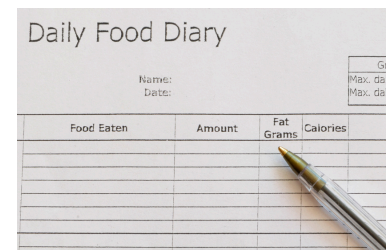


Ongoing Monitoring & Support

Tracking your progress with support from your healthcare provider and dietitian can help you stay on track toward your goals.

Tools and strategies include:

- Food tracking apps
- Wearable fitness trackers
- Body composition scales
- Protein and calorie tracking
- Journals and logs
- DEXA scans
- Regular blood tests



Use a combination of tools to track your progress, ensure proper nutrition, and monitor expected body changes effectively.

Disclaimer: The content provided in this handout only applies to FDA-approved injectable Semaglutide and Tirzepatide medications (Wegovy, Ozempic, Zepbound, and Mounjaro). It does not apply to other weight loss medications or compounded versions of Semaglutide or Tirzepatide. Consult with your physician for medication management.