

# Weight Loss And Diabetes Drugs Like Ozempic & Mounjaro Could Treat Sleep Apnea And Parkinson's Too—Here Are Other Conditions Scientists Are Looking At

Story by Robert Hart, Forbes Staff

Weight loss and diabetes may just be the beginning for drugs like **Ozempic**, **Wegovy**, **Mounjaro** and **Zepbound** as reports increasingly suggest they may have far-reaching benefits for treating conditions as diverse as heart and liver disease, Parkinson's, anxiety and addiction, sparking research among firms competing in pharma's latest gold rush. Two pharmaceutical companies have been doing in depth research: Novo & Lilly



GLP-1 drugs are being investigated for a range of other health conditions including addiction, liver disease and Parkinson's. getty© Provided by Forbes

Novo Nordisk's **Ozempic** and **Wegovy** and Eli Lilly's **Mounjaro** and **Zepbound** — brand names for drugs semaglutide and tirzepatide — are far and away the most famous members of a booming class of medications known as GLP-1 agonists, which mimic the function of a gut hormone involved in regulating blood sugar and appetite, glucagon-like peptide-1.

GLP-1 drugs were initially approved to treat **diabetes** and, more recently, **obesity**, and with more and more people using the drugs, signs of other potential benefits are starting to emerge and Novo gathered enough data to prove this and gained approval from the FDA in March to add **cardiovascular benefits** to Wegovy's label (experts expect Zepbound will be shown to have similar heart benefits).

Lilly on Wednesday said it also discovered for Zepbound, after a late-stage trial found that the drug "meaningfully improved **sleep apnea** symptoms," which means the drug "has the potential to be the first pharmaceutical treatment for sleep apnea".

In addition, companies like Novo and Lilly, as well as hopeful competitors like Boehringer and Zealand Pharma, are exploring GLP-1 drugs as a potential treatment for **fatty liver disease**, and other research, as trials suggest GLP-1s could be effective at treating **kidney disease**.