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For Naturopathic Medicine & Functional Nutrition

Lifestyle Strategies for Coming Off a GLP-1 Medication for Weight Management

Injectable Semaglutide and Tirzepatide (sometimes referred to as GLP-1 medications)* are often prescribed for weight management. Although these medications are intended for long-term use, it is not unusual for people to come off these medications. Common reasons one may decide to stop these medications include cost, side effects, accessibility, or simply wanting to manage their weight without medication.

What to Expect

If you've been using injectable Semaglutide or Tirzepatide for weight management and would like to stop the medication, be sure to discuss it with your physician, as they can help you safely come off the medication and create a plan for moving forward.

After stopping injectable Semaglutide or Tirzepatide, you might experience:

- **Increased appetite**: Since the medication no longer activates receptors in the brain that reduce hunger, your appetite will likely return to what it was before starting the medication.
- **Decreased feelings of fullness**: Since the medication no longer slows down your digestive system, you may not feel full as quickly as you did while taking the medication
- **Weight regain and changes in health measures**: After stopping the medication, it's common to regain some of the weight you lost while on it. With this, if certain health measures (such as blood pressure and blood glucose) had improved while on the medication, they may move back toward pre-medication levels.

Even if weight shifts happen, there are simple, realistic steps you can take to stay on track with your health goals.

Lifestyle Strategies

1 Get Support

- **Work with your physician:** They may recommend gradually lowering your dose (called tapering) to make the transition smoother and reduce side effects.
- **Work with other experts:** To support long-term success work with a registered dietitian who can help with nutrition, and a personal trainer who can guide you with exercise.



These strategies can help lower the risk of weight regain as you adjust.

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Lifestyle Strategies

2 Eat Balanced Meals Rich in Protein and Fiber

When building a plate, aim to **make ½ vegetables and fruits** (leaning towards more vegetables than fruits), **¼ protein**, and **¼ whole grains**. Incorporate **healthy fats** like oils, nuts, and seeds in small amounts and include **water** and other **unsweetened beverages**.

Whole foods like these can reduce the risk of chronic diseases and promote weight loss and weight loss maintenance.

Protein and **fiber** keep you feeling full, which can be especially helpful as your appetite and fullness cues return to pre-medication levels.

- Incorporate **protein-rich foods** like eggs, yogurt, chicken, fish, and beans into meals and snacks.
- Choose **fiber-rich foods** like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts, and seeds.
- Spread your protein and fiber intake throughout the day for the most benefit.

3 Exercise Regularly

- Regular exercise plays an important role in overall health. It can help with weight loss and maintenance, but it also helps reduce the risk of certain diseases such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease.
- Aim to get at least **150-300 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity or 75-150 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity per wee**k. In addition, **aim to do muscle-strengthening activities 2 or more days per week.**

4 Consider Other Strategies

- **Mindful eating**: Mindful eating can help you tune into your hunger and fullness cues and find more satisfaction from your meals and snacks.
- **Meal planning and meal prep:** Planning can make it easier to stay on track when days get busy.
- **Portion control:** Being mindful of portion sizes can help you enjoy foods in amounts that are supportive of your weight goals.



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.