



MEDICATIONS FOR WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

An overview of prescription medications used as part of comprehensive obesity care

Zepbound® (tirzepatide)

- Targets GIP and GLP-1 hormone receptors to reduce hunger and increase fullness. Taken once weekly by injection, with the dose increased gradually. Average weight loss: approximately 12–18%, depending on dose. Common side effects include nausea, diarrhea and constipation, particularly during dose escalation.

Wegovy® (semaglutide)

- A GLP-1 medication that reduces hunger and increases feelings of fullness. Taken once weekly by injection. Average weight loss: approximately 12%. Common side effects include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and constipation; gallbladder problems and pancreatitis are uncommon but important risks.

Saxenda® (liraglutide)

- A GLP-1 medication that decreases appetite and increases fullness. Taken daily by injection. Average weight loss: approximately 5%. Common side effects include nausea, diarrhea and constipation; gallbladder problems and pancreatitis are uncommon.

Contrave® (naltrexone/bupropion)

- A combination medication that affects brain pathways involved in hunger and cravings. Taken as tablets twice daily, with the dose increased gradually. Average weight loss: approximately 5%. Nausea, constipation and headache can occur. It is not appropriate for everyone and medication interactions and contraindications should be reviewed.

Xenical® (orlistat)

- Reduces the absorption of dietary fat by blocking fat-digesting enzymes. Taken with meals, usually three times daily. Average weight loss: approximately 3%. Oily or loose bowel movements are common, particularly after higher-fat meals.

Important points to remember

- The choice of medication depends on your health, treatment goals, other medications, preferences, tolerability, access and cost.
- Weight management medications are generally intended for long-term treatment. Stopping an effective medication can lead to weight regain.

Learn more about obesity and weight management at [Obesity Canada – Managing Your Obesity](https://obesitycanada.ca/for-patients/management/)
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***For informational purposes only. Medication choice, dosing and safety should be discussed with your healthcare professional. Medications available for weight management change over time as new treatments become available and recommendations are updated. ***



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