

GLP-1 Medications for Weight Loss: What Patients Should Know in 2026

Meta Description: Learn how GLP-1 medications like semaglutide and tirzepatide support weight loss, who qualifies, potential side effects, and how telemedicine makes treatment easier.

GLP-1 receptor agonists have changed the weight loss conversation. Originally developed for type 2 diabetes, medications like **Semaglutide** and **Tirzepatide** are now widely prescribed for chronic weight management.

How They Work

GLP-1 (glucagon-like peptide-1) medications mimic a natural hormone that regulates appetite and blood sugar. They:

- Slow gastric emptying
- Increase feelings of fullness
- Reduce cravings
- Improve insulin response

Clinical trials published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* show average weight loss ranging from 15–22% of body weight when combined with lifestyle changes.

Who Qualifies?

Most patients qualify if they:

- Have a BMI ≥ 30
- Have a BMI ≥ 27 with weight-related conditions (hypertension, sleep apnea, type 2 diabetes)

A telemedicine provider can evaluate your medical history, current medications, and risk factors virtually.

Side Effects & Considerations

Common side effects include:

- Nausea
- Constipation
- Diarrhea
- Mild fatigue

Serious risks are rare but may include gallbladder issues or pancreatitis. These medications are not recommended for individuals with a history of medullary thyroid carcinoma or MEN2.

The Telehealth Advantage

Telemedicine makes follow-up care, dose adjustments, and lab monitoring easier and more accessible. Patients can track progress, manage side effects, and receive coaching without frequent in-person visits.

Weight loss medications are tools—not magic. Sustainable results require nutrition, strength training, sleep optimization, and ongoing medical guidance.

Sources:

- Wilding JPH et al., *New England Journal of Medicine*, 2021.
- Jastreboff AM et al., *New England Journal of Medicine*, 2022.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Adult Obesity Facts