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Can Weight-Loss Drugs Solve My Weight Problem?

Weight-loss drugs can help some people lose significant weight — but they are not a magic fix, and they aren't right or effective for everyone. This document explains what these medications can do, what they cannot do, and how to determine whether they might be appropriate for you.

What the New Weight-Loss Drugs Actually Do

Medications such as semaglutide (Wegovy/Ozempic), tirzepatide (Zepbound/Mounjaro), and similar drugs work by:

- Reducing appetite
- Slowing stomach emptying
- Altering hunger and satiety signals in the brain

For many people, this leads to 10–20% or more weight loss over time. These medications are generally intended for:

- People with a BMI of 30 or higher, or
- People with a BMI of 27 or higher plus a weight-related condition (such as high blood pressure or pre-diabetes)

What These Medications Can Help With

- Making hunger more manageable — reducing constant cravings
- Kick-starting weight loss
- Speeding weight loss while learning necessary changes in lifestyle
- Reducing long-term health risks if followed by healthier habits

What These Medications Cannot Do

- They do not permanently fix metabolism
- Strong appetite usually returns when the medication is stopped
- They do not eliminate the need for lifestyle changes
- They do not work equally well for everyone
- They may not be tolerated due to side effects such as nausea, constipation, or fatigue

Most people regain some or all of the weight after stopping the medication unless strong habits have been established while using it.

Are These Medications Right for You?

1. Do You Meet the Medical Criteria?

Eligibility depends on your “soft” BMI and any related health conditions. Soft BMI is calculated using height and weight.

2. What Has Your Experience With Weight Loss Been?

These medications tend to help most when people report:

- Desire to live a higher quality life
- Strong feelings: Tired of looking and being fat
- Commitment to lifetime of making better choices
- History of yo-yo dieting, weight loss, and weight regain
- Feeling that hunger and cravings are difficult to control
- Having weight that is negatively affecting overall health