



REVOLUTION MEDICAL CLINIC

Obesity Medications:

Ozempic

Ozempic is a GLP-1 analogue: it is a copy of the hormone GLP-1

What is it?

A Glycogen-Like Peptide (GLP-1) analogue (or copy) that acts like the hormone that is naturally produced in the small intestine. GLP-1 is a fullness hormone which signals your brain that it is full. Your body naturally makes GLP-1 this is a hormone that we secrete from our small intestine to tell our brains that we are full. Ozempic is a copy of this hormone. As such it acts to tell your brain you are full. The brain does not think it is starving and you lose weight.

How does it work?

GLP-1 is a hormone that is naturally released when food hits your small intestine and signals the brain that you are full. This medication is a replicate of this hormone and acts in this same way by assisting in the communication between the receptors in the brain and the gut. Obesity is a disease where the body thinks it is starving and inappropriately stores fat tissue due to a miscommunication of hormones or a decrease in GLP-1 production in the body. Simply put, the brain thinks it is starving all of the time and stores fat tissue. By taking this medication, your body will be receiving a large amount of a fullness hormone, so your brain will think it is full and no longer starving and it will no longer want to store fat. It also decreases the production of glucagon (a hormone that opposes insulin), decreases glucose mobilization, sensitizes body to insulin, slows down the emptying of food from the stomach, and reduces the overall amount of food consumed.

What is it used for?

This medication is used off label for the treatment of obesity. It is a medication that was originally designed for the treatment of Type 2 Diabetes, but it was found that it also promotes weight loss. It is not officially approved in Canada for obesity YET. We use it off label in this regard. The studies have shown a huge benefit in patients without diabetes and with obesity for weight loss.

How do you take it?

This is a once weekly injection. You start at 0.25mg weekly for 4 weeks. If there are no adverse side effects, then you increase to 0.5mg weekly for 4 weeks. If there are no adverse side effects, then you increase the dose to 1mg weekly. The target dose is 1-2mg weekly. Your health care team will be following closely throughout this process to support you until you reach your target dose.

Expected Outcomes:

You may notice a decrease in appetite and an increase in the feeling of being full. The amount of food consumed may be reduced. Expected body weight loss is about 10-20% of total body weight. In people who have diabetes, you may see your A1C drop up to 2%. In people that do not have diabetes, there is an 80% reduction in developing Type 2 Diabetes. There is a 20% reduction in the risk of cardiovascular events, such as heart attack and stroke.

Common Side Effects:

Because your body is receiving a large amount of a gut hormone, the most common adverse effects are GI related, such as:

- Nausea (most common)
- Constipation
- Acid reflux
- Sulphur burps
- Abdominal bloating/gas
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Hypoglycemia

Speak with your health care providers about how to manage these side effects.

Saxenda:

Saxenda is a GLP-1 analogue: it is a copy of the hormone GLP-1

What is it?

A Glycogen-Like Peptide (GLP-1) analogue (or copy) that acts like the hormone that is naturally produced in the small intestine. GLP-1 is a fullness hormone which signals your brain that it is full. Your body naturally makes GLP-1 this is a hormone that we secrete from our small intestine to tell our brains that we are full. Saxenda is a copy of this hormone. As such it acts to tell your brain you are full. The brain does not think it is starving and you lose weight.

How does it work?

GLP-1 is a hormone that is naturally released when food hits your small intestine and signals the brain that you are full. This medication is a replicate of this hormone and acts in this same way by assisting in the communication between the receptors in the brain and the gut. Obesity is a disease where the body thinks it is starving and inappropriately stores fat tissue due to a miscommunication of hormones or a decrease in GLP-1 production in the body. Simply put, the brain thinks it is starving all of the time and stores fat tissue. By taking this medication, your body will be receiving a large amount of a fullness hormone, so your brain will think it is full and no longer starving and it will no longer want to store fat. It also decreases the production of glucagon (a hormone that opposes insulin), decreases glucose mobilization, sensitizes body to insulin, slows down the emptying of food from the stomach, and reduces the overall amount of food consumed.

What is it used for?

It is a medication that was originally designed for the treatment of Type 2 Diabetes, under the name Victoza, but it was found that it also promotes weight loss and gained FDA approval for chronic obesity management in 2014 under the name Saxenda.

How do you take it?

This is a once daily injection. You start at 0.6mg weekly for 1 week. If there are no adverse side effects, you increase the dose to 1.2mg daily for 1 week. If there are no adverse side effects, you increase the dose to 1.8mg daily for 1 week, then 2.4mg for 1 week, then 3.0mg. The full dose is 3.0mg which you should reach 5 weeks after starting the medication if you experience no adverse side effects. Your health care team will be following closely throughout this process to support you until you reach your target dose.

Expected Outcomes:

Something to think about is both the effect the drug has on weight and also the effect the drug has on symptoms (hunger and fullness).

Two thirds of people who take Saxenda lose more than 5% of their body weight. 30% of people on Saxenda lose more than 10% body weight.

From a symptom perspective people on the drug tend to feel fuller sooner and may eat less.

Common Adverse Side Effects:

Because your body is receiving a large amount of a gut hormone, the most common adverse effects are GI related, such as:

- Nausea (most common)
- Constipation
- Acid reflux
- Sulphur burps
- Abdominal bloating/gas
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Hypoglycemia

Speak with your health care providers about how to manage these side effects.

Contrace:

What is it?

It is a combination of 2 medications that were previously used for other treatments that have now come together to be used for obesity: 90mg of Bupropion Hydrochloride (brand name Wellbutrin) and 8mg of Naltrexone Hydrochloride. Bupropion is an anti-depressant. Naltrexone is an opiate antagonist which means it blocks opiate effects in the reward centre of the brain. Naltrexone is often used in people with opioid or alcohol dependence.

What is it used for?

This medication is used for the treatment of obesity.

How does it work?

The 2 medications, Bupropion and Naltrexone, work together to down regulate the hunger signals in the brain. Bupropion helps level the dopamine and norepinephrine stay slighter higher in the central nervous system and Naltrexone blocks the opioid receptors in the brain.

How do you take it?

For the first 2 weeks, you will take 1 pill with Breakfast. Weeks 3 and 4 you will take 1 pill with breakfast and 1 pill with dinner. In Weeks 5 and 6 you will take 2 pills with breakfast and 1 pill at dinner and in Week 7 onwards you will take 2 pills with breakfast and 2 pills with dinner. You should take this medication with food and avoid taking it with a high fat meal as it can affect absorption.

Expected Outcomes:

As this medication helps to down regulate the hunger signals in the brain, you should feel more full, consume less food, and have fewer food cravings.

Common Adverse Side Effects:

- Nausea
- Constipation
- Anxiety
- Headache
- Increased Blood Pressure

Speak with your health care providers about how to manage these side effects.

Vyvanse:

What is it?

Vyvanse is an amphetamine, or a central nervous system stimulant.

What is it used for?

It is used to treat Binge Eating Disorders. It has also been used to treat Attention Deficit Disorders in children and adults. IT IS NOT USED FOR OBESITY.

How does it work?

It works by restoring the level of neurotransmitters in the brain, specifically increasing the levels of Dopamine and Norepinephrine. Norepinephrine is a stimulant that helps your body deal with stress and Dopamine is associated with pleasure and motivation.

How do you take it?

You take it daily in the form of a capsule, once daily, with or without food. The most common dose to start with is 20mg daily and the maximum dose is 70mg daily. Your health care team will work with you to find the right dose for you by assessing the effectiveness and if there are any adverse side effects of the medication.

Expected Outcomes:

You may notice you are able to focus more clearly and have more control over your thoughts and actions. It may produce a decrease in compulsive thoughts, impulsive behaviours, and the number of binge eating episodes experienced.

Common Adverse Side Effects:

- Anxiety
- Increased HR or BP
- Difficulty sleeping
- Dry mouth
- Constipation or Diarrhea
- Feeling jittery
- Change in mood

Speak with your health care providers about how to manage these side effects.

Topiramate:

What is it?

Topiramate, more commonly called Topamax, is an anti-convulsant drug.

What is it used for?

It is used to treat epilepsy and migraine headaches. Due to its side effect of weight loss, it is sometimes used off label in the treatment of obesity. It has been known to assist in treating eating disorders, specifically in people that have Night Eating Syndrome and other Sleep Related Eating Disorders.

How does it work?

Topiramate works to decrease the amount of nerve activity in the brain.

How do you take it?

You will take it orally daily in pill form. The initial dose is 25mg a day, and if there are no adverse side effects you can increase the dose weekly. Your health care team will work with you to determine what the right dose is for you.

Expected Outcomes:

You may notice a reduction in nocturnal eating, improved sleep and weight loss.

Common Adverse Side Effects:

- Nausea
- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Difficulting concentrating
- Tingling in arms and legs
- Change in mood
- Diarrhea

Speak with your health care providers about how to manage these side effects.