**Semaglutide Drug information Sheet.**

**What is semaglutide?**

Semaglutide is a medicine used for weight loss in specific patients, and to lower blood sugar levels and reduce the risk of major cardiovascular events such as heart attack or stroke in type two diabetes patients. Semaglutide is a GLP-1 agonist and works by increasing insulin release, lowering the amount of glucagon released, delaying gastric emptying, and reducing appetite.

**Warnings**

Call your doctor at once if you have signs of a thyroid tumor, such as swelling or a lump in your neck, trouble swallowing, a hoarse voice, or shortness of breath.

You should not use semaglutide if you have multiple endocrine neoplasia type 2 (tumors in your glands), or a personal or family history of medullary thyroid cancer.

**Before taking this medicine**

You should not use semaglutide if you are allergic to it, or if you have:

* multiple endocrine neoplasia type 2 (tumors in your glands);
* a personal or family history of medullary thyroid carcinoma (a type of thyroid cancer); or
* diabetic ketoacidosis (call your doctor for treatment).

Tell your doctor if you have ever had:

* a stomach or intestinal disorder;
* pancreatitis;
* kidney disease; or
* eye problems caused by diabetes (retinopathy).

In animal studies, semaglutide caused thyroid tumors or thyroid cancer. It is not known whether these effects would occur in people. Ask your doctor about your risk.

Men and women should stop using semaglutide at least 2 months before you plan to get pregnant. Ask your doctor for a safer medicine to use during this time. Controlling diabetes is very important during pregnancy, as is gaining the right amount of weight. Even if you are overweight, losing weight during pregnancy could harm the unborn baby.

Ask a doctor if it is safe to breastfeed while using semaglutide.

Semaglutide is not approved for use by anyone younger than 18 years old.

**How does semaglutide work?**

Semaglutide works to lower high blood sugar by increasing the amount of insulin that is released, lowering the amount of glucagon released and by delaying gastric emptying. Semaglutide also controls appetite and so helps you reduce the amount of food that you want to eat. Semaglutide is a glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) agonist.

**Types of foods to avoid while taking semaglutide**

What type of food should you avoid while taking semaglutide? Fatty foods. That’s because dietary fat, in and of itself,[slows gastric emptying](https://academic.oup.com/jcem/article/91/6/2062/2843371). Combine that with semaglutide’s effect on your digestion, and you run the risk of food moving through your digestive tract *too* slowly. You may then experience a[slew of uncomfortable and downright painful gastrointestinal symptoms](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5593319/), like nausea, vomiting, bloating, and upper abdominal cramping.

**Types of foods to eat while taking semaglutide**

* **Prioritize complex carbohydrates:**Complex carbohydrates, like brown rice, oats, quinoa, and wholemeal spaghetti, are digested and absorbed more slowly (than refined carbohydrates) into the bloodstream, producing an associated slower, lower rise in blood sugar levels. Fill ¼ of your plate with complex carbohydrates.
* **Eat protein at every meal:**Adding protein to a meal could[reduce blood sugar spikes](https://academic.oup.com/jn/article/136/10/2506/4746688) by blunting post-meal glycemic response and enhancing satiety (which prevents overeating). Protein should make up roughly[10 to 35% of your total daily calorie intake](https://novi-health.com/library/protein-for-sustainable-weight-loss); a good guideline is to fill ¼ of your plate with protein. Choose lean proteins like plant proteins, pork loin, lean beef, skinless chicken breast, and white fish. These have the highest protein but the lowest saturated fat and calorie content.
* **Consume more vegetables and fruits:**Vegetables and fruits provide fiber, which helps[slow the breakdown and absorption of carbohydrates](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7059907/) into your bloodstream. It also boosts satiety. Try to fill half your plate with vegetables and fruits.
* **Limit highly processed foods:**Highly processed foods are jam-packed with blood-sugar-hiking refined sugar, unhealthy saturated fats, and salt. According to a [new 2022 animal study](https://www.ntu.edu.sg/docs/default-source/academic-services/ntu-singapore-scientists-uncover-key-cellular-mechanism-that-shows-saturated-fat-can-worsen-diabetes.pdf?sfvrsn=fa3ca7bb_1) by scientists at Nanyang Technological University (NTU) Singapore’s Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, saturated fat could worsen diabetes. On the other hand, an excessive intake of salt could [raise blood pressure](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6770596/)—[significantly raising your risk of having a heart attack or stroke](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5953551/).

**More helpful diet tips for semaglutide**

* **Do not overeat and when you eat, take smaller meals:**Once again, semaglutide slows down the digestive process. So, limiting the amount of food you take in any one single meal could prevent you from running into uncomfortable gastrointestinal symptoms like bloating and indigestion. Break up your meals into smaller, “mini-meals” and spread your intake over the day if needed.
* **Stay well-hydrated:**Since your small and large intestines help[absorb water from your food](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK507857/), the longer gastric emptying takes, the "drier" the resulting solid waste will be. Dry, hard stools are difficult to pass. So, to prevent constipation while taking semaglutide, take plenty of fluids. While fluid requirements vary among individuals based on factors like age, sex, and activity level, a general guideline is to get in [30 mL of fluids per kilogram of body weight](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/8990413/)(i.e., 30 mL/kg bodyweight or roughly 0.5 oz/lbs bodyweight).
* **Wait for at least three to four hours after meals before lying down:**Lying down when your stomach is still full could cause reflux and indigestion.

**Don’t let other healthy habits slide just because you’re on semaglutide.**

Semaglutide paired with a healthy diet can help you better manage diabetes. That said, you shouldn’t stop there. The following healthy lifestyle habits could also improve the effectiveness of semaglutide in controlling your blood sugar levels:

* [**Making time for regular physical activity**](https://novi-health.com/library/how-to-improve-diabetes-control-with-exercise)**:**Try to get at least 150 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous (or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity) cardio exercise per week. Ideally, you should also aim to fit in two days of muscle-strengthening activities weekly.
* [**Practicing stress management techniques**](https://pike-asparagus-8xmd.squarespace.com/library/managing-stress)**:**Examples include meditation, breathing exercises, and socializing with loved ones.
* [**Getting at least seven to nine hours of high-quality sleep nightly**](https://pike-asparagus-8xmd.squarespace.com/library/importance-of-sleep)**:** Maintaining good sleep hygiene practices, like sticking to a consistent sleep-wake schedule and avoiding eating a meal too close to bedtime, could help.

**General Semaglutide dosing information**

Read and follow all instructions you have been given. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you need help.

Do not use different brands or forms of semaglutide at the same time.

Blood sugar can be affected by stress, illness, surgery, exercise, alcohol use, or skipping meals.

Low blood sugar **(hypoglycemia)** can make you feel very hungry, dizzy, irritable, or shaky. To quickly treat hypoglycemia, eat or drink hard candy, crackers, raisins, fruit juice, or non-diet soda. Your doctor may prescribe glucagon injection in case of severe hypoglycemia.

Tell your doctor if you have frequent symptoms of high blood sugar (hyperglycemia) such as increased thirst or urination. Ask your doctor before changing your dose or medication schedule.

Your treatment may also include diet, exercise, weight control, medical tests, and special medical care.

You may get dehydrated during prolonged illness. Call your doctor if you are sick with vomiting or diarrhea, or if you eat or drink less than usual.

**What happens if I overdose?**

Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222.

Overdose may cause severe nausea, vomiting, or low blood sugar.

**Semaglutide side effects**

Get emergency medical help if you have signs of an allergic reaction: [hives](https://www.drugs.com/cg/urticaria.html), itching; dizziness, fast heartbeats; difficult breathing; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

**Serious side effects of semaglutide may include:**

call your doctor at once if you have:

* vision changes;
* unusual mood changes, thoughts about hurting yourself;
* pounding heartbeats or fluttering in your chest;
* a light-headed feeling, like you might pass out;
* signs of a thyroid tumor--swelling or a lump in your neck, trouble swallowing, a hoarse voice, feeling short of breath;
* symptoms of pancreatitis--severe pain in your upper stomach spreading to your back, nausea with or without vomiting, fast heart rate;
* gallbladder problems--upper stomach pain, fever, clay-colored stools, jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes);
* low blood sugar--headache, hunger, weakness, sweating, confusion, irritability, dizziness, fast heart rate, or feeling jittery;
* kidney problems--swelling, urinating less, feeling tired or short of breath; or
* stomach flu symptoms--stomach cramps, vomiting, loss of appetite, diarrhea (may be watery or bloody).

**Common side effects of semaglutide may include:**

* low blood sugar (in people with type 2 diabetes);
* upset stomach, heartburn, burping, gas, bloating;
* nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, loss of appetite;
* diarrhea, constipation;
* stomach flu symptoms;
* headache, dizziness, tiredness.

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

**What other drugs will affect semaglutide?**

Semaglutide can slow your digestion, and it may take longer for your body to absorb any medicines you take by mouth.

Tell your doctor about all your other medicines, especially insulin or other diabetes medicine, such as dulaglutide, exenatide, [liraglutide](https://www.drugs.com/mtm/liraglutide.html), Byetta, Trulicity, Victoza, and others.

Other drugs may affect semaglutide, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products. Tell your doctor about all other medicines you use.

**Pregnancy and breastfeeding**

**Pregnancy:** Men and women should stop using semaglutide at least 2 months before you plan to get pregnant. Ask your doctor for safer medicine to use during this time. Controlling diabetes is very important during pregnancy, as is gaining the right amount of weight. Even if you are overweight, losing weight during pregnancy could harm the unborn baby.

**Breastfeeding**: Ask a doctor if it is safe to breastfeed while using prescriptions containing semaglutide

Reference: https://www.drugs.com/semaglutide.html

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