



# Tirzepatide for Obesity Treatment and Diabetes Prevention

A recent study suggested that tirzepatide might also help prevent diabetes, so you might hear more about this medicine from your doctor. We wanted to share some more information about it.

## What is tirzepatide?



Tirzepatide is a type of injectable medicine that works like two natural hormones in the body: glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) and gastric inhibitory peptide (GIP).

It's sometimes grouped with other GLP-1 medicines, but that's not exactly correct. Because it works like both GLP-1 *and* GIP, it belongs to its own class of medicine.

But like GLP-1 medicines, tirzepatide was first developed to help people with diabetes control their blood sugar. Only later did we learn that it also helps people lose weight.

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## How does tirzepatide work?

Tirzepatide acts like two natural hormones in our bodies: GLP-1 and GIP. These hormones help control blood sugar levels, especially after eating. They work in a few ways:

- Slow down digestion to prevent blood sugar from rising too quickly after meals.
- Make you feel less hungry, which can lead to eating less and losing weight.
- Help the body release insulin more efficiently and lowering a hormone called glucagon, which helps keep blood sugar in check.

By combining all these effects, tirzepatide helps manage blood sugar levels and supports weight loss.





## Will tirzepatide help me lose weight and prevent diabetes?

In a recent study<sup>1</sup>, tirzepatide did help people lose weight and avoid diabetes.

People who took the tirzepatide lost about 20% of their weight. For example, someone who weighed 200 pounds lost about 40 pounds.

Tirzepatide also helped people at risk of diabetes avoid getting it. Only 1 out of 100 people taking the medicine got diabetes, compared to 13 out of 100 who didn't take it.

But does that mean tirzepatide will help you specifically lose weight and prevent diabetes? *Probably, but we can't know for certain.*

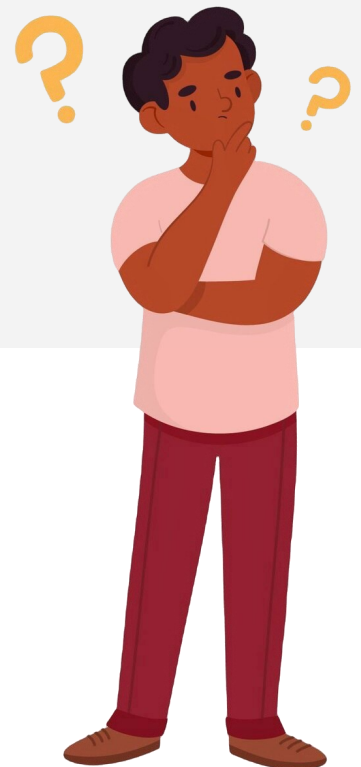
## What do you mean “probably”?

We often think science gives us clear answers—either a medicine works, or it doesn't. But the truth is more complicated, especially with new medicines like tirzepatide.

Like all studies, this one has some limitations.

- Everyone ate fewer calories (-500) each day and exercised at least 150 minutes a week—people had to make big changes to their diet and activity levels for the results to happen.
- Only people who were obese *and* prediabetic were included—if your BMI is within normal or overweight, or you aren't prediabetic, the results may not apply as well to you.
- Even then, most of the study's participants were just barely “prediabetic”—we don't know if they were really at a high risk for diabetes in the first place.

Another thing to know is that Eli Lilly, the company that makes tirzepatide, funded the study. This could mean the results aren't completely unbiased.



<sup>1</sup> Jastreboff AM, le Roux CW, Stefanski A, et al. Tirzepatide for Obesity Treatment and Diabetes Prevention. *N Engl J Med*. Published online November 13, 2024. doi:10.1056/NEJMoa2410819