

Starting Medication for Weight Management



Why do I Need Weight Management Medication?



Lots of different factors influence body weight, including genetics, environment, and hormones.¹ This means it can be challenging to lose weight and keep the weight off, and adding medications to lifestyle changes can help with this.¹



There are several medications available for weight management and your health care provider will discuss the options with you. Together, you will agree on the best medication for you based on your preferences, circumstances, and needs.²



Not everybody responds to weight management drugs, and weight loss varies between individuals.² This is not due to personal failure. Your health care provider can advise you on alternative choices if this happens.

Setting Goals With Your Health Care Provider

Before choosing the right medication for you, discuss your weight loss expectations and what you want to achieve from your weight management plan with your health care provider.

Goals should:

- ✓ Be personalized to meet your individual needs and preferences
- ✓ Focus on more than just weight loss, such as improving overall health and quality of life
- ✓ Take into account your physical capabilities and other medical conditions
- ✓ Be realistic and achievable with the therapies available to you
- ✓ Be adapted as necessary to meet changing circumstances

ALWAYS READ THE PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET BEFORE TAKING YOUR MEDICATION FOR FULL DETAILS AND SAFETY INFORMATION.

1. Obesity Canada. Canadian Adult Obesity Clinical Practice Guidelines. Accessed March 14, 2022. <https://obesitycanada.ca/guidelines/chapters>;
2. Drugs@FDA. Accessed March 14, 2022. <https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cder/daf/index.cfm>.

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Getting to Know Your New Medication



Ask Questions About Your New Drug

When you pick up your new medication, it's important to get all the information you need and ask your pharmacist or health care provider any questions you have. Make a note of the answers for later reference.



What is the name of the medication and how is it spelled?

How does the medication work?

How much of the medication should I take, and how do I take it?

When do I need to take it, and should I take it with food?

Are there any side effects I should be aware of, and what side effects or problems should I let you know about?

How will it affect my weight?

Could the medication affect my blood glucose levels?

If I miss a dose, what should I do?

How do I store the medication at home and when I travel?

How will I know it's the right medication for me and if it is working?

If you are already taking medications (prescribed or over-the-counter):
Will this medicine interact with other medicines that I'm already taking?

Top Tips

Read the "Instructions for Use" that come with your medication.

These provide details on how to take your medication and side effects to watch out for.

Keep an up-to-date list of your medications

Show your health care provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

Tell your pharmacist and health care provider about all the medicines you take.

Include prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

Tell your pharmacist or health care provider if you are taking medicines to treat diabetes.

These might need to be adjusted when you start weight management medication.

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Taking Your Medication: Xenical[®] (orlistat)



Dosing

Orlistat does not require dose titration.¹ Take your medication as directed by your health care provider.



- ✓ The dose of orlistat is 120 mg, 3 times per day.
- ✓ Swallow the capsule whole, during or up to 1 hour after each main meal containing fat.
- ✓ Store at room temperature.

What if I miss a dose?

- Take your next dose as normal.
- If you have any concerns, ask your pharmacist or health care provider for specific guidance.



Side Effects^a

Common side effects you might experience when taking orlistat are shown below.¹ If any of the side effects bother you or do not go away, tell your pharmacist or health care provider.¹

Aim for a reduced-fat diet (< 30% total daily calories from fat), to reduce risk of experiencing common side effects.

- Oily^b rectal discharge
- Passing gas with oily^b discharge
- Urgent need to have a bowel movement
- Oily^b or fatty stools
- Increased number of bowel movements
- Being unable to control your bowel movements

^a Rare, serious side effects associated with some weight management medications are summarized later in this guidance;

^b Oily discharge may be clear or have an orange or brown color.

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1. Drugs@FDA. Accessed March 14, 2022. <https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cder/daf/index.cfm>.

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Taking Your Medication: Qsymia[®] (phentermine/topiramate)

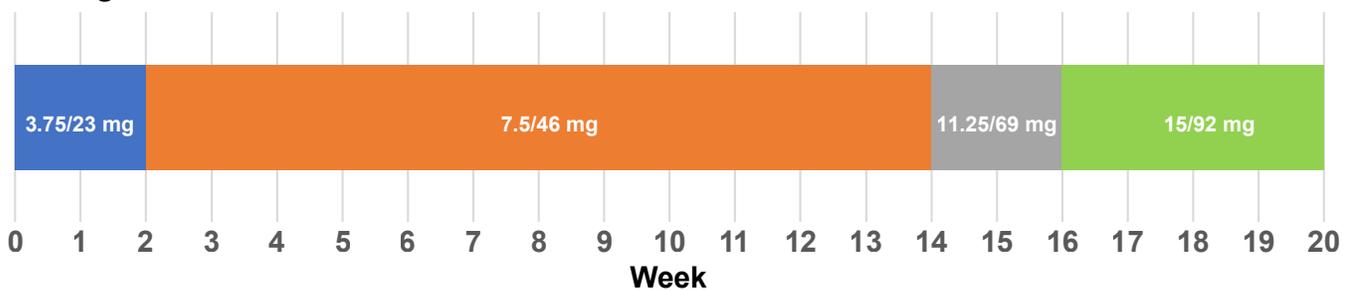


Dosing

Increase the dose of phentermine/topiramate gradually.¹ This gives you time to get used to the medication and can help reduce the risk and severity of potential side effects.¹



Dosing Schedule



What if I miss a dose or decide I want to stop taking the medication?

- Wait until the next morning to take usual dose. Do not double the dose.
- Talk to your health care provider about stopping slowly.
- Do not stop the medication suddenly as this can cause serious problems, like seizures.



- ✓ Store at room temperature.
- ✓ Swallow the capsule whole, in the morning.
- ✓ Avoid evening dosing due to potential for insomnia.

Side Effects^a

Common side effects you might experience when taking phentermine/topiramate are shown below.¹ If any of the side effects bother you or do not go away, tell your pharmacist or health care provider.¹

- Numbness or tingling in the hands, arms, feet, or face
- Dizziness
- Change in the way foods taste or loss of taste
- Trouble sleeping
- Constipation
- Dry mouth

^a Rare, serious side effects associated with some weight management medications are summarized later in this guidance.

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1. Drugs@FDA. Accessed March 14, 2022. <https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cder/daf/index.cfm>.

Taking Your Medication: Contrave[®] (naltrexone/bupropion)

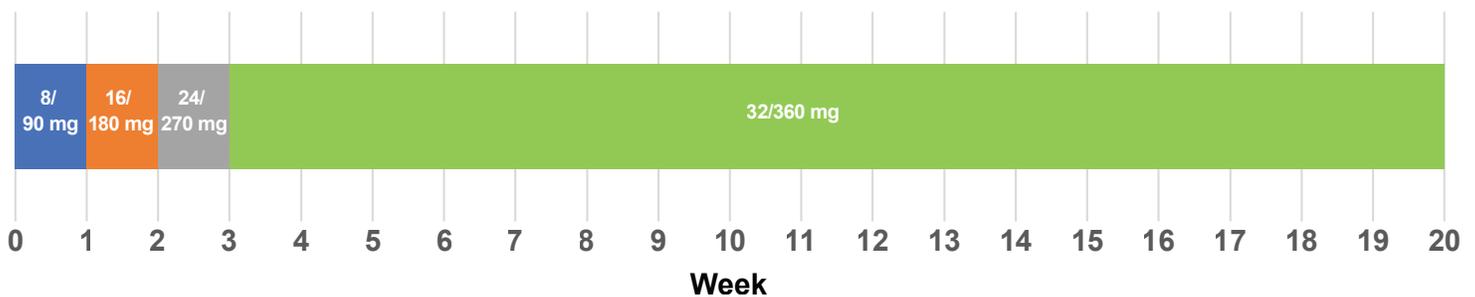


Dosing

Increase the dose of naltrexone/bupropion gradually.¹ This gives you time to get used to the medication and can help reduce the risk and severity of potential side effects.¹



Dosing Schedule^a



What if I miss a dose?

- Wait until your next regular time to take your medication.
- Do not take more than 1 dose at a time.
- If you have any concerns, ask your pharmacist or health care provider for specific guidance.



- ✓ Store at room temperature.
- ✓ Swallow the capsule whole.
- ✓ Do not take with high-fat meals due to increased risk of seizure.

Side Effects^b

Common side effects you might experience when taking naltrexone/bupropion are shown below.¹ If any of the side effects bother you or do not go away, tell your pharmacist or health care provider.¹

- Nausea
- Dizziness
- Constipation
- Trouble sleeping
- Headache
- Dry mouth
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

^a 1 tablet in the morning Week 1; add 1 tablet at night Week 2; increase to 2 tablets in the morning and 1 tablet at night Week 3, then increase to 2 tablets in the morning and 2 tablets at night Week 4 and onwards; ^b Rare, serious side effects associated with some weight management medications are summarized later in this guidance.

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1. Drugs@FDA. Accessed March 14, 2022. <https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cder/daf/index.cfm>.

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Taking Your Medication: Saxenda[®] (liraglutide 3.0 mg)

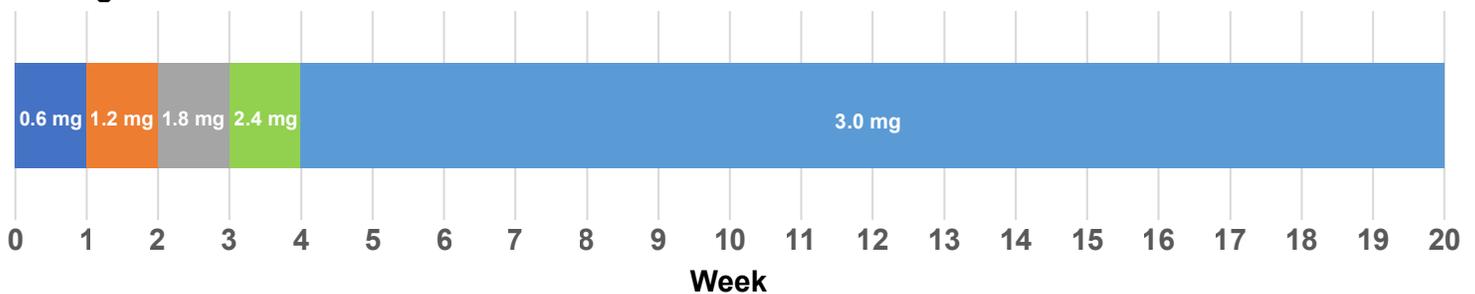


Dosing

Liraglutide 3.0 mg is an injectable medication, which requires gradual dose increase.¹ This gives you time to get used to the medication and can help reduce the risk and severity of potential side effects.¹



Dosing Schedule



What if I miss a dose?

- Take your next dose at the usual time on the next day. Do not take an extra dose or take a higher dose than usual.
- If you have missed your dose for **more than 3 days (36 hours)**, you will need to restart the medication at the lowest dose and gradually increase the dose according to the dosing schedule above. Be sure to talk to your health care provider before you restart.



Storage and Use

Storage

- Do not freeze (if frozen, throw away)
- Keep away from heat and out of light
- Refrigerate new, unused pens at 36°F to 46°F
- After first use, refrigerate or store at room temperature (59°F to 86°F)
- Throw away the used pen after 30 days

Use

- Inject under the skin (subcutaneously) of your stomach (abdomen), thigh, or upper arm
- Do not inject into a muscle (intramuscularly) or vein (intravenously)

How to take your medication

- Wash hands
- Check medication (name of drug, expiration date, clear colorless solution in pen)
- Attach a new needle (sold separately)
- Pull off both needle caps
- Check flow with new pens
- Twist end to select correct dose
- Insert needle, press and hold dose button until dose counter is at 0, count slowly to 6
- Remove needle, dispose in sharps bin
- Replace cap and store per instructions if pen contains additional medication



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Taking Your Medication: Saxenda (liraglutide 3.0 mg)



Side Effects^a

Common side effects you might experience when taking liraglutide 3.0 mg are shown below.¹ If any of the side effects bother you or do not go away, tell your pharmacist or health care provider.¹



- Nausea
- Diarrhea
- Constipation
- Vomiting
- Injection site reaction
- Low blood sugar (hypoglycemia)
- Headache
- Upset stomach
- Tiredness (fatigue)
- Dizziness
- Stomach pain
- Change in enzyme (lipase) levels in your blood

^a Rare, serious side effects associated with some weight management medications are summarized later in this guidance.

Top Tips for Managing Gastrointestinal Side Effects When Taking Liraglutide 3.0 mg¹⁻⁴

Gastrointestinal side effects (nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea) should ease over time. However, there are a few things you can do to help reduce the severity and/or frequency of them.¹⁻⁴

1

Increase your dose slowly when possible

2

Decrease your food intake and stop eating when full

3

Limit how many spicy meals or high fat content meals you eat

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1. Drugs@FDA. Accessed March 14, 2022. <https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cder/daf/index.cfm>. 2. Hinnen D. *Diabetes Spectr*. 2017;30:202-210; 3. Nauck MA, et al. *Mol Metab*. 2021;46:101102; 4. Romera I, et al. *Diabetes Ther*. 2019;10:5-19.

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Taking Your Medication: Wegovy[®] (semaglutide 2.4 mg)

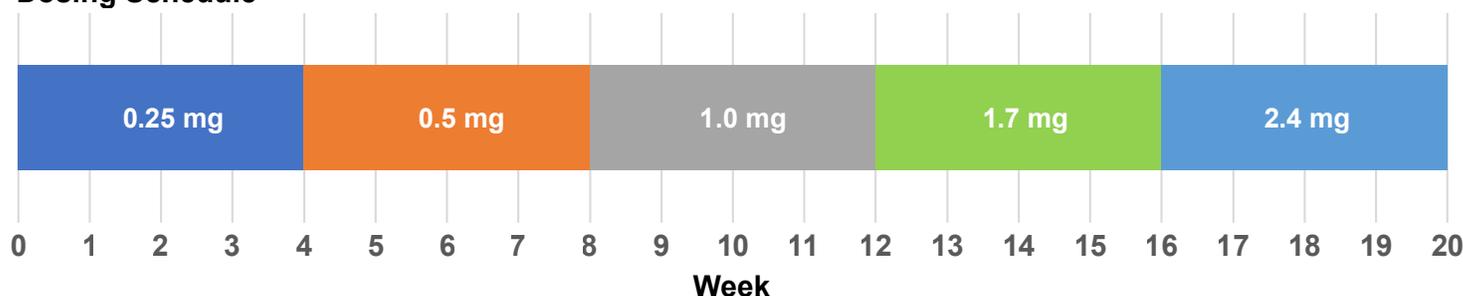


Dosing

Semaglutide 2.4 mg is an injectable medication, which requires gradual dose increase.¹ This gives you time to get used to the medication and can help reduce the risk and severity of potential side effects.¹



Dosing Schedule



What if I miss a dose?

- If your next scheduled dose is **less than 2 days (48 hours) away**, do not take another dose. Take your next dose on the regularly scheduled day, and do not add a dose or increase your dose.
- If your next scheduled dose is **more than 2 days (48 hours) away**, take the missed dose as soon as possible.
- If you miss doses for **more than 2 weeks**, take your next dose on the regularly scheduled day or call your health care provider to discuss how to restart.



Storage and Use

Storage

- Do not freeze (if frozen, throw away)
- Keep in original carton to protect from light (if exposed to light, throw away)
- Refrigerate single-use pens at 36°F to 46°F
- Before removing pen cap, can be stored from 8°C to 30°C (46°F to 86°F) in original carton for up to 28 days if needed

Use

- Inject under the skin (subcutaneously) of your stomach (abdomen), thigh, or upper arm
- Do not inject into a muscle (intramuscularly) or vein (intravenously)
- Change (rotate) your injection site with each injection. Do not use the same site for each injection

How to take your medication

- Wash hands
- Check medication (name of drug, expiration date, clear colorless solution in pen)
- Clean the injection site
- Pull cap directly off
- Push firmly against skin until the yellow bar stops moving (5 to 10 seconds; there will be a click sound at the beginning and the middle of the injection)
- Dispose of empty pen in a sharps bin



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Taking Your Medication: Wegovy (semaglutide 2.4 mg)



Side Effects^a

Common side effects you might experience when taking semaglutide 2.4 mg are shown below.¹ If any of the side effects bother you or do not go away, tell your pharmacist or health care provider.¹



- Nausea
- Stomach (abdomen) pain
- Dizziness
- Stomach flu
- Diarrhea
- Headache
- Feeling bloated
- Reflux
- Heartburn
- Vomiting
- Tiredness (fatigue)
- Belching
- Constipation
- Upset stomach
- Gas
- Low blood sugar, or hypoglycemia (if you have type 2 diabetes)

^a Rare, serious side effects associated with some weight management medications are summarized later in this guidance.

Top Tips for Managing Gastrointestinal Side Effects When Taking Semaglutide 2.4 mg¹⁻⁴

Gastrointestinal side effects (nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea) should ease over time. However, there are a few things you can do to help reduce the severity and/or frequency of them.¹⁻⁴

1

Increase your dose slowly when possible

2

Decrease your food intake and stop eating when full

3

Limit how many spicy meals or high fat content meals you eat

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Safety of Weight Management Medication



Rare, Serious Side Effects

Some weight management medications can cause serious side effects. If you experience any of the following signs and symptoms, contact a health care provider immediately.¹



Serious allergic reactions



Swelling of face, lips, tongue or throat; severe rash or itching; very rapid heartbeat; problems breathing or swallowing; fainting or feeling dizzy; *contact emergency services immediately if this happens*

Pancreatitis



Severe pain in stomach area (abdomen) that will not go away, with or without vomiting; may feel pain from abdomen to back

Depression, suicidal actions or thoughts



Sudden changes in your mood, behaviors, thoughts, or feelings that are new, worse, or worry you

Severe liver problems



Yellowing of skin or white part of eyes (jaundice), dark/amber-colored urine, pain in upper right portion of stomach

Changes in vision



Sudden decrease in vision with or without eye pain and redness, a blockage of fluid in the eye causing increased pressure, swelling or redness around the eye



Kidney problems (kidney failure)

Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea that will not go away, or inability to drink liquids by mouth



Low blood sugar (hypoglycemia)

Especially if already taking medications for diabetes



Increased heart rate

Heart racing or pounding in chest that lasts for several minutes



Gallbladder problems

Pain in upper stomach (abdomen), yellowing of skin or eyes (jaundice), fever, clay-colored stools, nausea, vomiting

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