



Diabetes Wellness Newsletter

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As Spring gradually turns into Summer, we hope this newsletter finds you well and enjoying the fresh air and beauty that the Pacific Northwest offers to us this time of year. This newsletter issue shares information about preventing side effects that often are associated with the popular GLP-1 class of medications. We also bring you helpful tips about a simple change in food preparation that can have significant benefits in blood sugar management. As always, we hope you will share this information with others, let us know if there are other topics of interest to you, and contact us with any questions!

PREVENTING GLP-1 SIDE EFFECTS BEFORE DIABETES TREATMENT

By Carmen Eucker, BSN, RN, CDCES

GLP-1 receptor agonists (Victoza/Liraglutide), (Trulicity/dulaglutide), (Ozempic/Semaglutide), (Mounjaro/tirzepatide) and (Rybelsus/Semaglutide) are a class of medications used in the management of type 2 diabetes and, in some cases, for weight loss. While they offer significant benefits, including improved glycemic control (blood sugar), weight reduction, kidney and cardiovascular protection, they are also associated with gastrointestinal side effects that can impact hydration and nutrition. These side effects are most common during the initial weeks of therapy or after dose increase.

The most frequently reported side effects include nausea, vomiting, early satiety, bloating, and delayed gastric emptying. These symptoms can make it difficult for patients to tolerate food and fluids, potentially leading to dehydration, electrolyte imbalance, and nutritional deficiencies. Diarrhea and constipation are also common, further complicating hydration status. In severe cases, patients may avoid eating or drinking altogether, which can compromise their overall health and glycemic control.



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To manage these side effects, clinicians often recommend starting with a low dose and increasing gradually to allow the body time to adjust. Eating small, frequent meals instead of large portions can help reduce nausea and fullness. Patients are advised to avoid high-fat, spicy, or sugary foods, which may make symptoms worse. Hydration should be prioritized through small, frequent sips of water or electrolyte-containing fluids.



High-water foods such as soups, smoothies, fruits, and vegetables can support hydration when drinking is difficult. Avoiding lying down after meals may also reduce reflux and discomfort. Choosing gentle, easy-to-digest foods and allowing the stomach to adjust gradually can make a meaningful difference. If symptoms become difficult to manage, patients should reach out to their healthcare team, who can adjust the dose, slow the titration schedule, or offer additional guidance while keeping them safely on therapy.

Preventing side effects begins with patient education and proactive management. Before initiating therapy, patients should be informed about potential gastrointestinal symptoms and strategies to mitigate them. Clinicians may tailor the dosing schedule to the patient's tolerance and monitor closely during the first few weeks. If symptoms persist or interfere with daily functioning, dose adjustments or temporary discontinuation may be necessary.

In summary, while GLP-1 medications offer substantial benefits, their side effects require careful attention. With proper education, gradual dosing, and supportive strategies, most patients can tolerate therapy and achieve positive outcomes.

If you have questions, please feel free to reach out to your healthcare provider or the Diabetes Wellness and Dietitian Services team.

References:

1. **American Diabetes Association (ADA)** – Standards of Care in Diabetes (most current guideline hub). [Standards of Care in Diabetes | ADA Clinical Guidelines](#)
2. **Juan J. Gorgojo-Martínez** et al. Clinical Recommendations to Manage Gastrointestinal Adverse Events in Patients Treated with GLP-1 Receptor Agonists: A Multidisciplinary Expert Consensus. [Journal of Clinical Medicine](#) (2023)
3. **Bibek Saha, Vijayvardhan Kamalumpundi, Don C. Codipilly**. GLP-1 and GIP Receptor Agonists: Effects on the Gastrointestinal Tract and Management Strategies for Primary Care Physicians. [Mayo Clinic Proceedings](#) (2025).
4. Gastrointestinal effects of GLP-1 receptor agonists: mechanisms... [The Lancet Gastroenterology & Hepatology](#) (2024).
5. **Ryan J. Jalleh** et al. The science of safety: adverse effects of GLP-1 receptor agonists as glucose-lowering and obesity medications. [Journal of Clinical Investigation](#) (2026).
6. **Cho-Hung Chiang** et al. Glucagon-Like Peptide-1 Receptor Agonists and Gastrointestinal Adverse Events: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. [Gastroenterology](#) (2025).
7. Comparative gastrointestinal adverse effects of GLP-1 receptor agonists and multi-target analogs in type 2 diabetes: a Bayesian network meta-analysis. [Frontiers in Pharmacology](#) (2025).

COLD POTATO & WHITE BEAN SALAD

A refreshing and fiber-rich dish perfect for a light meal or side. It's full of resistant starch!

Ingredients:

- 2 cups cooked and cooled potatoes (cubed)
- 1 cup cooked and cooled white beans
- ½ cup peas (fresh or frozen, thawed)
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
- Salt to taste
- Fresh herbs (parsley or dill) for garnish

Instructions:

1. In a bowl, combine cooled potatoes, beans, and peas.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, lemon juice, mustard, salt, and pepper.
3. Pour the dressing over the salad and toss gently.

Garnish with fresh herbs and serve chilled.

Source: <https://countrylifefoods.com>



UPCOMING DIABETES AND PRE-DIABETES CLASSES AT MGH!

Pre-Diabetes classes; 2-part class series for anyone with pre-diabetes or concerned with Type 2 diabetes prevention. Presented by MGH Registered Dietitians.

- Class #1 on July 15th from 1-2:30 in the Ellinor meeting room and October 14th from 2-3:30 in the Ellinor meeting room. Focus is introduction to pre-diabetes, healthy eating & meal planning for pre-diabetes and chronic disease prevention.
- Class #2 on July 22nd from 1-2:30 in the Washington meeting room and October 21st from 2-3:30 in the Ellinor meeting room. Focus is physical activity, stress management, sleep, and goal setting for pre-diabetes management and diabetes prevention.

Classes are FREE and no referral is needed - call Sarah Hazen (MGH Diabetes Wellness Scheduler) to sign up: 360-427-9543

Living Well with Diabetes classes; 4-part class series for people who were diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes within the past 12 months. May be appropriate for people diagnosed longer than 12 months ago, depending upon insurance coverage. Classes are presented by a team of healthcare professionals with years of experience in diabetes education and management.

UPCOMING DIABETES AND PRE-DIABETES CLASSES AT MGH!

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Session 1 on June 4th from 2:30-4:30, August 19th from 4:30-6:30 PM, October 6th from 10AM – noon, and December 8th from 7:30-9:30 AM: Intro/review of Type 2 diabetes, monitoring blood sugar, and medications.

Session 2 on June 11th from 2:30-4:30 and October 13th from 10AM – noon: Healthy eating and meal planning

Session 3 on June 18th from 2:30-4:30 and October 20th from 10AM – noon: Personalized activity planning, and stress management / coping

Session 4 on June 25th from 2:30-4:30 and October 27th from 10AM – noon: Reducing short-term and long-term risks associated with diabetes

A Mason General Diabetes Education referral is required from your Primary Care Provider. You may choose to attend as many of the sessions as you wish, within the parameters of your insurance coverage.

For more information, call Sarah Hazen (MGH Diabetes Wellness Scheduler) 360-427-9543.



To sign up for the Diabetes Wellness Newsletter via email or by mail, email foundation@masongeneral.com or call the Diabetes Wellness Center at (360) 427-9543.



To reach Diabetes Wellness, contact (360) 427-9543.

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