

Drugmaker Novo Nordisk profits jump in diabetes scourge

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Novo Nordisk is the world's leading insulin maker

Danish drugmaker Novo Nordisk, the world's leading insulin provider, on Wednesday reported a six percent jump in net profit in the first quarter, as the global onslaught of diabetes continued to grow.

The group saw its [net profit](#) grow to 10.7 billion kroner (1.44 billion euros, \$1.72 billion) even as its sales decreased by five percent in Danish kroner year-on-year, reflecting a depreciation of the US dollar.

Novo Nordisk, which holds 46 percent of the world's insulin market share, is performing well thanks to a global [diabetes](#) scourge.

According to the World Health Organization, the number of people with diabetes has soared from 108 million in 1980 to 422 million in 2014.

The global prevalence of diabetes among adults has nearly doubled during that time, to 8.5 percent.

WHO has estimated 1.6 million deaths around the world were directly caused by diabetes in 2015, while another 2.2 million deaths were linked to [high blood glucose](#) in 2012.

For 2018, Novo Nordisk expects sales to grow by three to five percent in local currency, compared with two to five percent as previously announced.

The vast majority—84 percent—of the company's sales were in diabetes medication, including the flagship Tresiba insulin drug and Victoza, which is similar to insulin.

The rest came from treatments for haemophilia and growth hormones, for which Novo Nordisk saw its sales decrease by three and 10 percent respectively.

During the same period, the European and Japanese authorities granted the drugmaker authorisation for Ozempic, its new medication for type-2 diabetes.

The treatment was launched in the United States in February.

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