

Wegovy lowered users' heart risks in new trial

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A large clinical trial weighing the medical merits of the obesity drug

Wegovy has unearthed a significant positive side effect.

Taking the [medication](#) cut the risk of serious heart problems by 20%, [drug](#) maker Novo Nordisk announced Tuesday.

"People living with obesity have an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, but to date, there are no approved weight-management medications proven to deliver effective weight management while also reducing the risk of heart attack, stroke or [cardiovascular death](#)," Martin Holst Lange, executive vice president for development at Novo Nordisk, said in a company news release.

According to Dr. Howard Weintraub, clinical director of the Center for the Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease at NYU Langone Heart, in New York City, "There is now a drug that is well-tolerated and safe from a cardiovascular perspective, that also lowers [body weight](#) in an effective manner. On top of all of this, there is significant reduction in the cumulative outcome of nonfatal MI [heart attacks], cardiac death and stroke."

"This is a very important study," he added, "as no other weight loss medication has been shown to reduce cardiovascular events. It is likely that the beneficial impacts of this drug go above and beyond just weight loss. We were part of this important trial, and I think we all agree that this was a very important study."

However, Novo Nordisk did not share any additional details about exactly how the medication impacted weight loss or [heart health](#), and the data has not yet been published in a peer-reviewed journal.

Though the findings will need to be confirmed, "they demonstrate the urgent need for patients living with obesity to be offered this effective and safe drug to prevent future disease," Simon Cork, a senior lecturer at

Anglia Ruskin University in England, told *The New York Times*.

The medication may improve patients' lives while saving health systems money, Cork added.

"This data also shows the need for obesity to be treated as a serious health issue which needs aggressive treatment," Cork said.

The trial results may help provide the evidence needed for insurance coverage of the medication. The drug's list price is \$1,349 a month, and neither Medicare nor health insurance companies cover weight-loss medications, the *Times* reported.

About 17,000 adults who were overweight or obese and had [cardiovascular disease](#) but not diabetes participated in the Novo Nordisk trial. Researchers tracked the incidence of [heart](#) attacks, strokes and cardiovascular deaths during the five-year study period.

More information: The World Health Organization has more on [obesity](#).

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