

Semaglutide could benefit millions of Americans with obesity, heart disease

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Semaglutide (brand name: Wegovy) has the potential to markedly reduce the risk of heart attacks and other heart-related conditions among millions of Americans with obesity who have also been diagnosed with cardiovascular disease, a Yale study shows.

The research was based on the Semaglutide Effects on Cardiovascular Outcomes in People With Overweight or Obesity ([SELECT](#)) trial, which researchers presented in full on November 11 at the American Heart Association Scientific Sessions in Philadelphia.

The trial's leaders had previously announced its topline results—that semaglutide reduces the risk of major heart events such as [heart attack](#), stroke, and cardiovascular death by 20% in adults aged 45 and older who have [heart disease](#) and [obesity](#) but no prior history of diabetes.

Semaglutide could benefit more than 6 million Americans

The Yale study, using the SELECT trial inclusion criteria published in *Obesity* (January 2023), estimated that 6.6 million Americans could benefit from the medication. "The potential for population benefit is enormous, as large numbers of people have the potential to improve their health," says Yuan Lu, ScD, lead author and assistant professor of medicine (cardiology).

Previous studies have already shown that Ozempic, which is the same medication but was approved to treat diabetes, reduces cardiovascular risk in people living with obesity and diabetes. But this trial confirms that the benefit of semaglutide can be applied to people without diabetes, a population that the Yale study showed has grown by about 50% over the past decade.

"Our findings highlight that the population that can benefit from the application of the SELECT trial results is growing, indicating the increasing importance of these medications as tools to improve [health outcomes](#)," says Ania Jastreboff, MD, Ph.D., associate professor of medicine and of pediatrics (endocrinology), director of the Yale Obesity

Research Center (Y-Weight), and co-director of the Yale Center for Weight Management.

Minoritized groups show high need for semaglutide access

The study also highlights the various racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups that could significantly benefit from access to semaglutide.

"Our study shows that minoritized populations and those with lower socioeconomic status are disproportionately represented among those who could benefit, and we need to ensure that everyone who can benefit has access to these medications," says Harlan M. Krumholz, MD, SM, Harold H. Hines Jr. Professor of Medicine (Cardiology) and director of the Center for Outcomes Research and Evaluation.

More information: Ildiko Lingvay et al, Semaglutide for cardiovascular event reduction in people with overweight or obesity: SELECT study baseline characteristics, *Obesity* (2022). [DOI: 10.1002/oby.23621](https://doi.org/10.1002/oby.23621)

Semaglutide Effects on Cardiovascular Outcomes in People With Overweight or Obesity—SELECT. www.acc.org/Latest-in-Cardiology/3/11/09/15/04/select

Provided by Yale University

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