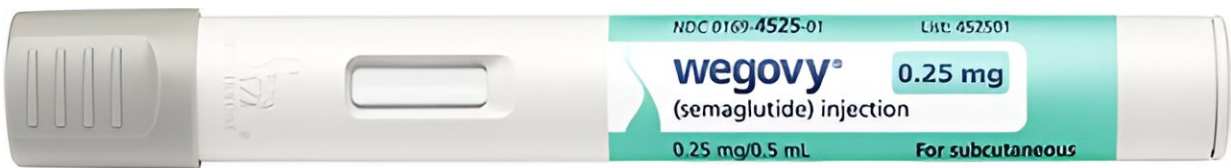


Study suggests Wegovy helps those with both diabetes, heart failure

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For people struggling with both diabetes and a common type of heart failure, the weight-loss drug Wegovy may do more for their health than help them shed pounds, new research suggests.

In the study, [published](#) in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, researchers reported that the drug helped people with type 2 diabetes who also had obesity-related "heart failure with preserved ejection-fraction," on several fronts.

This condition happens when the heart pumps normally, but the organ is too stiff to fill properly.

"I think the answer from the trial clearly suggests that, while [weight loss](#) is likely an important factor, it cannot explain everything," study co-author Dr. Mikhail Kosiborod, a cardiologist and vice president of research at St. Luke's Health System in Kansas City, Mo., told CNN.

"I think that's incredibly exciting because first of all, these patients are really difficult to treat and there are a lot more of them every day," Kosiborod said. "And until recently, we had very little to offer them, so if we know it actually modifies the disease process, we have something really effective—and by the way, really well-tolerated as well—and that's, of course, great news for patients and great news for doctors taking care of patients."

People with obesity-related heart failure tend to tire easily and have trouble breathing, and those who also have type 2 diabetes have a more severe form than those who don't have the blood sugar disease.

The researchers who conducted this latest study—which was funded by drug maker Novo Nordisk—also published a [study](#) last fall that found

that Wegovy delivered significant benefits to people without diabetes who had obesity-related heart failure. However, the team wanted to see whether the drug would work as well in people who also had diabetes.

Wegovy was first [approved](#) in 2021 to treat obesity. Just last month, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration also [approved Wegovy to reduce the risk of cardiovascular death, heart attack and stroke](#) in obese/overweight adults with heart disease. This latest study offers up fresh evidence that Wegovy's benefits extend to people with diabetes.

For the study, the researchers randomly assigned 616 people who had type 2 [diabetes](#) and heart failure with preserved ejection-fraction into two groups. The participants came from 108 sites in 16 countries, and all had a body-mass index of 30 or more. One group got Wegovy, and the other group got a placebo.

The participants who got Wegovy started at a lower dose and worked their way to a 2.4 milligram dose once a week. Researchers followed both groups for a year.

Patients who got Wegovy had much better outcomes, with more weight loss and a bigger reduction in heart failure-related symptoms and physical limitations. They also could walk farther over the course of six minutes and showed improvements in biomarkers for inflammation.

There were 55 serious adverse events reported in the group that took Wegovy and 88 in the placebo group. Six people died in the Wegovy group, compared with 10 in the placebo group. One death in the Wegovy group and four in the placebo group were related to heart issues.

The findings of this trial, along with the one published last year, suggest Wegovy works for a broad population of people, Kosiborod said.

Kosiborod, who presented the research Saturday at the American College of Cardiology [annual meeting](#) in Atlanta, added that he thinks the study opens up the possibility of treating heart failure by treating obesity.

"Obesity, it is a lot more than weight. It's a systemic cardiometabolic condition that causes all kinds of bad things, and treating obesity involves weight loss, but it means a lot more than that," he said. "We have to target it, and I think future standards of care for this type of heart failure will improve, and without a doubt in my mind, it's going to include obesity management."

More information: Mikhail N. Kosiborod et al, Semaglutide in Patients with Obesity-Related Heart Failure and Type 2 Diabetes, *New England Journal of Medicine* (2024). [DOI: 10.1056/NEJMoa2313917](https://doi.org/10.1056/NEJMoa2313917)

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