

Taking a GLP-1 medicine? Here's what experts say you should eat

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Folks using a weight-loss drugs like Ozempic, Wegovy or Zepbound still

have nutritional requirements for good health, even if they're eating less.

A new set of nutritional recommendations are expected to help people remain healthy even as they shed unwanted pounds, researchers say.

The guidelines are meant "to equip clinicians with knowledge and tools to help support optimal nutritional and [medical outcomes](#) for their patients treated with anti-obesity medications," researcher Lisa Neff, executive director of global medical affairs for Eli Lilly and Company, said in a news release. Eli Lilly makes Zepbound.

The guidelines, crafted following an [evidence review](#), call for women taking a weight-loss drug to eat between 1,200 to 1,500 calories a day. Men using the medication should eat 1,500 to 1,800 calories a day.

A day's food should include:

- More than 60 to 70 grams of protein. Recommended sources include beans, seafood, lean meat, poultry, low-fat dairy and eggs.
- Healthy carbohydrates constituting 45% to 65% of overall energy intake, with added sugars limited to less than 10% of intake. Whole grains, nuts and seeds, fruits, vegetables and dairy are recommended.
- Fats constituting between 20% and 35% of energy intake, with saturated fats limited to less than 10% of intake. Nuts, [seeds](#), avocado, [vegetable oil](#), fatty fish and seafood are recommended; avoid fried and high-fat foods due to gastro-intestinal effects associated with weight-loss drugs.
- About 21 to 25 grams of fiber daily for women and 30 to 38 grams for men. Fruits, [vegetables](#) and [whole grains](#) are recommended sources; a fiber supplement can be used if a person is not able to meet fiber goals through diet.

- Two to three liters of fluids, including water, low-calorie beverages and low-fat dairy. Caffeine should be limited or avoided.

The guidelines also recommend multivitamin, calcium and vitamin D supplementation to make sure a person is getting the daily required levels of these micronutrients.

Doctors should monitor patients' dietary intake while they're taking weight-loss drugs, to make sure they aren't suffering any signs of malnutrition, the researchers said.

"Simply focusing on [weight loss](#) is insufficient for optimal health," Jessica Alvarez, an associate professor of medicine at Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta, said in a news release. Alvarez was not associated with the research.

"People with obesity are already at risk for some nutrient deficiencies," she added. "This is an important guide acknowledging the need for thorough nutritional assessment before and during treatment with anti-obesity medications. Many patients need detailed guidance on what and how much to eat to ensure optimal diet quality, avoid nutrient deficiencies and avoid excessive muscle loss while taking anti-obesity medications."

The evidence review and [guidelines](#) are to be published soon in the journal *Obesity*.

More information: Jaime P. Almandoz et al, Nutritional considerations with antiobesity medications, *Obesity* (2024). [DOI: 10.1002/oby.24067](https://doi.org/10.1002/oby.24067)

The American Medical Association has more about [weight-loss drugs](#)

[and nutrition.](#)

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