

Semaglutide Patient FAQ: 15 Essential Questions

1. What exactly is Semaglutide and how does it work?

Semaglutide is a **GLP-1 (Glucagon-Like Peptide-1) receptor agonist**. It mimics a natural hormone your body releases after eating. It works in three main ways:

- **Brain:** It targets the "hunger center" to reduce food cravings and "food noise."
- **Stomach:** It slows down gastric emptying, making you feel full longer.
- **Pancreas:** It helps your body manage blood sugar more efficiently.

2. Is this the same thing as insulin?

No. While both can be used for blood sugar, they are different classes of medication. Insulin lowers blood sugar directly, whereas Semaglutide helps your body release its own insulin only when needed and primarily focuses on appetite regulation.

3. How quickly will I see results?

Most patients begin to feel a reduction in appetite within the first **24 to 48 hours**. However, visible weight loss typically becomes significant between **weeks 8 and 12** as the dosage is gradually increased.

4. What are the most common side effects?

The most frequent side effects are gastrointestinal:

- Nausea (most common during dose increases)
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Abdominal bloating or "sulfur burps"
- Mild fatigue or headache

Note: These are usually temporary and subside as your body adjusts to the medication.

5. Can I still eat whatever I want?

While you *can*, you likely won't *want* to. High-fat, greasy, or very sugary foods often cause significant nausea or cramping while on this medication. To see the best results, we recommend a diet high in lean protein and fiber.

6. Do I have to give myself a shot every day?

No. Semaglutide is a **once-weekly injection**. You should take it on the same day each week, at any time of day, with or without food.

7. What happens if I miss a dose?

If you miss a dose and it is **within 5 days** of your scheduled day, take it as soon as you remember. If more than 5 days have passed, skip that dose and take your next one on your usual scheduled day. Do not take two doses at once.

8. Will I gain the weight back if I stop?

Clinical studies (including the STEP trials) show that many patients regain weight if they stop the medication without having established permanent lifestyle changes. Many patients transition to a **maintenance dose** rather than stopping abruptly.

9. How long do I need to stay on this medication?

Obesity is a chronic condition. For some, this is a short-term "jumpstart" (6–12 months); for others, it is a long-term management tool. Your provider will help you decide based on your metabolic health markers.

10. Can I drink alcohol while taking Semaglutide?

You can, but use caution. Alcohol can lower blood sugar, and many patients find they have a much lower tolerance or an increased "hangover" feeling due to the slowed digestion.

11. Is "Ozempic Face" or "Muscle Loss" real?

Rapid weight loss from *any* method can cause volume loss in the face or muscle wasting. To prevent this, we prioritize **high protein intake** (1.2–1.5g per kg of body weight) and **resistance training** (weight lifting) while on the medication.

12. Are there people who should NOT take Semaglutide?

You should not take this medication if you have:

- A personal or family history of **Medullary Thyroid Carcinoma (MTC)**.
- **Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia syndrome type 2 (MEN 2)**.
- A history of **Pancreatitis**.
- Are currently pregnant or planning to become pregnant within 2 months.

13. Where should I inject it?

The best sites are the **abdomen** (at least 2 inches from the belly button), the **front of the thigh**, or the **back of the upper arm**. Rotating sites each week helps prevent skin irritation.

14. How should I store the medication?

Unopened pens/vials should be kept in the **refrigerator**. Once in use, most pens can be kept at room temperature for up to 56 days (depending on the brand), but keeping them cool is generally preferred.

15. Why is my dose increasing every month?

We use a "titration" schedule (starting at 0.25mg). This slowly introduces the medication to your system to **minimize side effects** while finding the lowest effective dose for your specific body.