PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Semaglutide

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: US

Ozempic; Ozempic (0.25 or 0.5 MG/DOSE); Ozempic (1 MG/DOSE); Ozempic (2 MG/DOSE); Rybelsus; Wegovy; Wegovy HD

Brand Names: Canada

APO-Semaglu(0.25 or 0.5MG/DOS); APO-Semaglutide (1 MG/DOSE); Ozempic (0.25 or 0.5 MG/DOSE); Ozempic (1 MG/DOSE); Rybelsus; Semaglutide (1 MG/DOSE); Semaglutide(0.25 or 0.5MG/DOS); Wegovy; Wegovy FlexTouch

Warning

- This drug has been shown to cause thyroid cancer in some animals. It is not known if this happens in humans. If thyroid cancer happens, it may be deadly if not found and treated early. Call your child's doctor right away if your child has a neck mass, trouble breathing, trouble swallowing, or has hoarseness that will not go away.
- Do not use this drug if your child has a health problem called Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia syndrome type 2 (MEN 2), or if your child or a family member has had a type of thyroid cancer called medullary thyroid cancer (MTC). Talk to your child's doctor if you are not sure.
- Have your child's blood work checked and thyroid ultrasounds done as you have been told by your child's doctor.

What is this drug used for?

Wegovy prefilled pens and prefilled syringes:

- It is used to help with weight loss in certain people.

All other products:

- If your child has been given this drug, talk with the doctor about the benefits and risks. Talk with the doctor if you have questions or concerns about giving this drug to your child.

What do I need to tell the doctor BEFORE my child takes this drug?

- If your child is allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had.
- If your child has ever had pancreatitis.
- If your child has a slow-moving bowel tract or other stomach or bowel problems.
- If your child is using another drug that has the same drug in it.
- If your child is using another drug like this one. If you are not sure, ask your child's doctor or pharmacist.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell the doctor and pharmacist about all of your child's drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe to give this drug with all of your child's other drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug your child takes without checking with the doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while my child takes this drug?

- Tell all of your child's health care providers that your child is taking this drug. This includes your child's doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Have your child follow the diet and exercise plan your child's doctor told you about.
- Alcohol may interact with this drug. Be sure your child does not drink alcohol.
- If your child will be having any surgery or procedure, talk with your child's doctor. This drug may raise the risk of food getting into the lungs during surgery or other procedures that use anesthesia or deep sedation. Your child may need to stop this drug before these types of surgery or procedures.
- Kidney problems have happened. Sometimes, these may need to be treated in the hospital or with dialysis.
- If your child cannot drink liquids by mouth or has upset stomach, throwing up, or diarrhea that does not go away; your child needs to avoid getting dehydrated. Contact your child's doctor to find out what to do. Dehydration may lead to new or worse kidney problems.
- This drug may prevent other drugs taken by mouth from getting into the body. If your child takes other drugs by mouth, you may need to give them at some other time than this drug. Talk with the doctor.
- Do not share pen or cartridge devices with another person even if the needle has been changed. Sharing these devices may pass infections from one person to another. This includes infections you may not know your child has.
- If your child has high blood sugar (diabetes), you will need to watch your child's blood sugar closely.
- If your child is planning on getting pregnant, talk with your doctor. This drug may need to be stopped at least 2 months before getting pregnant.

If your child is pregnant or breast-feeding a baby:

- Weight loss during pregnancy may harm an unborn baby. If your child gets pregnant while taking this drug or wants to get pregnant, call the doctor right away.
- Tell the doctor if your child is breast-feeding a baby. You will need to talk about any risks to the baby.

What are some side effects that I need to call my child's doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your child's doctor or get medical help right away if your child has any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of kidney problems like unable to pass urine, change in how much urine is passed, blood in the urine, or a big weight gain.
- Signs of gallbladder problems like pain in the upper right belly area, right shoulder area, or between the shoulder blades; change in stools; dark urine or yellow skin or eyes; or fever with chills.
- Severe dizziness or passing out.
- A fast heartbeat.
- Change in eyesight.
- A burning, numbness, or tingling feeling that is not normal.
- Low blood sugar can happen. The chance may be raised when this drug is used with other drugs for diabetes. Signs may be dizziness, headache, feeling sleepy or weak, shaking, fast heartbeat, confusion, hunger, or sweating. Call the doctor right away if your child has any of these signs. Follow what you have been told to do for low blood sugar. This may include

giving your child glucose tablets, liquid glucose, or some fruit juices.

- Severe and sometimes deadly pancreas problems (pancreatitis) have happened with this drug. Call your child's doctor right away if your child has severe stomach pain, severe back pain, or severe upset stomach or throwing up.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your child's doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother your child or do not go away:

- Constipation, diarrhea, throwing up, and upset stomach are common with this drug. If these happen, talk with your doctor about ways to lower these side effects. Call your doctor right away if any of these effects bother you, do not go away, or are severe.
- Stomach pain.
- Headache.
- Feeling dizzy, tired, or weak.
- Nose or throat irritation.
- Runny nose.
- Bloating.
- Burping.
- Gas.
- Heartburn.
- Hair loss.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your child's doctor. Call your child's doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

How is this drug best given?

Give this drug as ordered by your child's doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

All products:

- It is given as a shot into the fatty part of the skin on the top of the thigh, belly area, or upper arm.
- If you will be giving your child the shot, your child's doctor or nurse will teach you how to give the shot.
- Give this drug with or without food.
- Give on the same day each week.
- Move the site where you give the shot with each shot.
- Do not give into skin within 2 inches (5 cm) of the belly button.
- Do not use if the solution is cloudy, leaking, or has particles.
- This drug is clear and colorless. Do not use if the solution changes color.
- Wash your hands before and after use.
- Do not use this drug if it has been dropped or if it is broken.
- Keep giving this drug to your child as you have been told by your child's doctor or other health care provider, even if your child feels well.
- Throw away needles in a needle/sharp disposal box. Do not reuse needles or other items. When the box is full, follow all local rules for getting rid of it. Talk with a doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions.

Wegovy single-dose prefilled pens and prefilled syringes:

- Each container is for one use only. Use right after opening. Throw away any part of the opened container after the dose is given.

Wegovy multi-dose prefilled pens:

- This pen is not for self-injection by people who cannot see well. If your child cannot see well, someone else may need to give this injection. Talk with the doctor.
- Attach new needle before each dose.
- Do not wash or soak the pen. It may be cleaned with mild soap on a damp cloth.
- This pen has 4 doses in it. Throw away any drug left in the pen after 4 doses have been used.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

- Give a missed dose as soon as you think about it and go back to your child's normal time.
- If it is less than 48 hours until your child's next dose, skip the missed and go back to your child's normal time.
- Do not give 2 doses within 48 hours of each other.
- If you miss giving your child 2 doses, call the doctor.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

All products:

- Store unopened pens in a refrigerator. Do not freeze.
- Do not store right next to the cooling element in the refrigerator.
- Do not use if it has been frozen.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

Wegovy single-dose prefilled pens and prefilled syringes:

- You may store unopened containers at room temperature. If you store at room temperature, throw away any part not used after 28 days.
- Store in the outer carton to protect from light.
- Protect from heat.
- Throw away drug if stored at a temperature above 86°F (30°C).

Wegovy multi-dose prefilled pens:

- After opening, store in the refrigerator or at room temperature. Throw away any part not used after 56 days.
- Protect from heat and light.
- Throw away drug if stored at a temperature above 86°F (30°C).
- Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Take off the needle after each shot and safely put it in a needle/sharp disposal box. Do not store this device with the needle on it.
- Store with the pen cap on.

General drug facts

- If your child's symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your child's doctor.
- Do not share your child's drug with others and do not give anyone else's drug to your child.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your child's doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

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If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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