



What You Need to Know About GLP-1 Receptor Agonists

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What are glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) receptor agonists (RAs)?

GLP-1 RAs are a group of medications that lower blood sugar in several ways: They prevent your liver from making too much sugar; they help your pancreas produce and release more insulin when your blood sugar is high; and they slow down how quickly food leaves your stomach.



Your healthcare provider may prescribe a GLP-1 RA if:



Your A1C is above your goal or you have high blood sugar



You have heart disease or are at high risk of heart disease

You want to decrease your risk of low blood sugar

You want to reduce weight gain or lose weight



Lower blood glucose



Protect against heart disease

Benefits of GLP-1 RAs

Weight loss



Possible kidney protection



Comparison of GLP-1 RAs

There are multiple GLP-1 RAs available. Most are injectable and are dosed either twice daily, once daily, or once weekly. One drug is available as a pill. Your healthcare provider will help you select the agent that is best for your individual needs.

Medication

Approved Uses

Injection

By Mouth



To Improve Blood Sugar in Addition to Lifestyle Modifications

To Prevent Heart Disease

To Assist With Weight Loss



Dulaglutide



Once weekly

Exenatide



Twice daily

Exenatide ER



Once weekly

Liraglutide



Once daily

Lixisenatide



Once daily

Semaglutide



Once daily

Semaglutide



Once weekly

Tips for Taking a GLP-1 RA

Take your medication the way your healthcare provider or pharmacist tells you. You will start at a low dose and slowly increase the dose over time. This helps to reduce possible side effects of the medication.

Common side effects of GLP-1 RAs include nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, and decreased appetite. If you experience nausea, tell your healthcare provider. You can also try:

- Increasing the medication slowly according to your healthcare provider's instructions
- Eating smaller, more frequent meals
- Eating slowly and stopping at first sign of fullness
- Eating low-fat foods



Side effects with GLP-1 RAs typically go away over time. If your side effects do not improve, tell your healthcare provider. He or she may want to lower your dose.