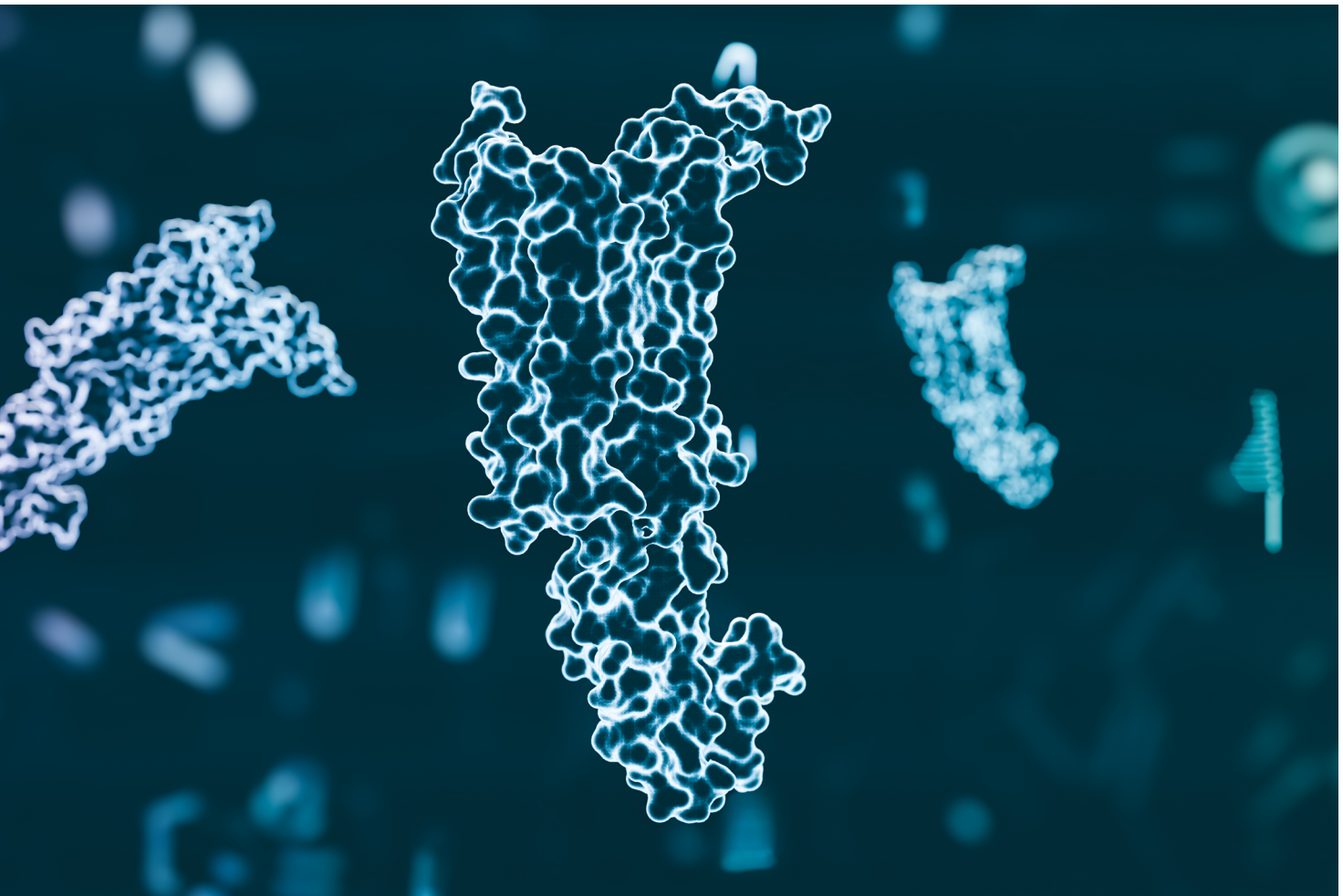

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Beyond Diabetes and Obesity

New GLP-1 Indications Will Continue to Transform Healthcare



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GLP-1 drugs like Ozempic[®] and Wegovy[®] (semaglutide) and GLP-1/GIP drugs such as Mounjaro[®] and Zepbound[®] (tirzepatide) have emerged as groundbreaking advancements in healthcare. Initially developed for diabetes management, these medications first expanded into the realm of weight loss treatments. Now these medications, along with others in the development pipeline, are beginning to be recognized for their potential to address a wide array of health issues, possibly reshaping the health status of many more Americans beyond those dealing with diabetes and weight loss.



Recent approval represents a milestone

In March 2024, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved Wegovy (semaglutide) for use in reducing the risk of cardiovascular death, heart attack and stroke in overweight and obese adults who have previously experienced a heart attack, stroke or the consequences of peripheral artery disease. Ongoing research is pointing toward approval of semaglutide and other new-to-market GLP-1s for additional indications such as sleep apnea, Alzheimer’s disease and more:

INDICATION	NOTES	APPROVAL OUTLOOK
Sleep apnea	With potentially the first pharmaceutical treatment on the market for sleep apnea, Eli Lilly has reported clinical trial results showing the benefits of Zepbound (tirzepatide) in reducing the occurrence of sleep apnea.	<u>Data published in June 2024.</u>
Alzheimer’s disease	Trials have shown improved nerve cells, inflammation and vascular health, which may slow the progression of Alzheimer’s disease.	Data for treatment with semaglutide anticipated in 2025.

INDICATION	NOTES	APPROVAL OUTLOOK
Nonalcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH), a.k.a., metabolic dysfunction–associated steatohepatitis (MASH)	Only semaglutide, to date, has data showing reduced liver fat and reversal of fibrosis.	Approval package submitted to FDA for semaglutide; approval may occur in 2025. Approvals for tirzepatide, survodutide and efinopegdutide are TBD.
Chronic kidney disease	Trials have shown improvement in kidney health for patients with obesity.	Studies with tirzepatide and retatrutide are in Phase 2. Retatrutide studies are expected to be completed Nov. 2025.
Osteoarthritis	May help patients who have osteoarthritis of the knee. Trials are currently measuring the change from baseline in pain scores.	<u>Study with semaglutide has been completed.</u> <u>Study with retatrutide is in progress.</u>
Cancer	Although the mechanism is not fully understood, studies have found that people with obesity were able to restore natural killer cell metabolism (a natural anticancer defense).	Undetermined.
Addiction	Researchers are reporting the effects of GLP-1 receptors in the brain. Patients who experience addictive behaviors have noticed reduced cravings for alcohol, shopping and coffee.	Research is currently anecdotal and preclinical.

A turning point for employers

For employers who provide health and wellness benefits, it's important to keep abreast of the potential expanded uses of GLP-1 medication.

With new approvals potentially increasing demands for accessibility, along with the possibility of large government-funded health plans such as Medicare and Medicaid beginning to broadly expand treatments for obesity, the pressure on private insurance to follow suit will likely increase.

Widespread adoption of GLP-1 medication holds considerable implications for employers when it comes to their employee health plans, because on- and off-label utilization will likely increase prescription frequency, and the cost implications to pharmacy benefit plans are already well-documented.

The landscape related to GLP-1 drug applications and their potential for expanded coverage under insurance plans will continue to evolve for the foreseeable future. With more approvals from the FDA, cost and utilization will continue to climb, and the ability to exclude coverage of these medicines for certain uses may become more untenable.

Concerned about how GLP-1 drugs and rising prescription prices are impacting your benefits program? Talk to an expert from Lockton to learn more and find a solution.



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