

For further information about this service contact:

Integrated Community Diabetes Services  
The Poynt, Units 2-3  
Poynters Road  
Luton, LU4 0LA

Tel: 0333 4053 128



Tel: 020 7424 1000  
[www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk)

If you require this information in a different format such as in large print or on audio tape, or in a different language please contact the service on the details above.

If you have any compliments about this service or suggestions for improvements, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 0300 131 1000 (charges may apply depending on your network) or email: [ccs-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ccs-tr.pals@nhs.net).

For free, confidential health advice and information 24 hours a day, 365 days a year please contact NHS 111.



GLP1 Injectable Therapy

Getting the most from your treatment  
Information for patients

Integrated Community Diabetes Services



### What does a GLP1 do?

- Helps your body produce more insulin when it is needed
- Reduces the amount of glucose being produced by the liver when it is not needed
- Slows down the speed at which your stomach digests food and empties
- Reduces your appetite.

### How can a GLP1 help me?

**When combine with a health balanced diet and healthy lifestyle, GLP1 can help reduce :**

- Blood glucose levels and
- Your weight

### How do I get a GLP1?

GLP1 is prescribed for people who are overweight normally with a body mass index (BMI) of more than 35kg/m<sup>2</sup>.

Sometimes there are special cases such as occupational reasons where a GLP1 can be prescribed for someone whose BMI is less than 35 kg/m<sup>2</sup>

GLP1 is not suitable for everyone, eg those with kidney or severe gastrointestinal problems.

***Ask your GP, Practice Nurse or Diabetes Specialist Nurse whether you would be suitable for a GLP1.***

### How is a GLP1 taken?

It is taken as a subcutaneous injection.

### Are GLP1s insulin?

No, GLP1 is not insulin.

### Can I take GLP1 as a tablet?

No, GLP1 is a protein which if taken by mouth, will be broken down by the enzymes in the digestive system and will not work.

The only way of administering GLP1 medication at present is by injection.

- Liraglutide is injected once per day.
- Dulaglutide and Semaglutide are injected once per week.

### Can GLP1 cause side effects?

Most people who take a GLP1 long-term do not suffer any side effects.

On commencing a GLP1, nausea (feeling of sickness) is common for the first week but almost invariably settles on its own accord.

Other possible side effects include:

- a sense of fullness
- weight loss
- Diarrhoea
- headache.
- Allergies and skin rash are extremely unusual side effects.

One rare but important side effect to be aware of is 'pancreatitis' an inflammation of the pancreas. ***If you have any severe tummy pain, persistent vomiting or severe weight loss you should contact your GP.***

### Do I have to stay on GLP1 for life?

GLP1 medicines are trialled with each patient for six months. At six months the patient will be assessed to see if they have shown:

- A weight loss of 3% of their starting weight - commonly in the region of 6kg (1 stone) and
- An improvement in their HbA1c measurement by at least 11mmol/mol.

If benefit is shown, the medication can be continued long-term, if there are no benefits, the medicine will be stopped.

### Diet and Lifestyle

For most patients improved blood glucose control and weight loss will be seen when a GLP1 is combined with:

- Reduced portion sizes and a lower energy diet.
- Healthy food choices
- Increased activity levels.

You will be expected to attend regular appointments for the first six months with one of our specialist diabetes dietitians. They will help you to make appropriate changes to your diet and lifestyle so that you get the best from your GLP1.

### GLP1 currently available

- Liraglutide (Victoza)
- Dulaglutide (Trulicity)
- Semaglutide (Ozempic)