

Prescription Weight Loss Drugs: A Short Communication

Radhika Sharma *

Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, India.

Correspondence to: Radhika Sharma, Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, India.

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Obesity is a global and multifactorial disease defined as an abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that poses a health risk. Obesity is associated with a number of comorbidities, such as Cardiovascular Disease (CVD), metabolic syndrome, Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM), cancer and, according to recent studies, also increases risk of severe COVID-19 infection. The global prevalence of obesity doubled between 1980 and 2008. From 1980 to 2013, the proportion of overweight people globally increased in men (from 28.8% to 36.9%) and women (from 28.8% to 36.9%). from 29.8% to 38%) with a continuing trend towards obesity. increased rates of obesity and overweight. Due to the increasing morbidity, significant impact on health and medical costs, obesity with comorbidities has become a public health problem [1].

Traditionally, the cause of obesity has been attributed to an imbalance between caloric intake and energy expenditure. Of particular importance is that research has shown that 5% to 10% weight loss is sufficient to produce clinically relevant improvements to health risk factors such as elevated blood sugar levels and other biomarkers associated with CVD risk. For successful maintenance of weight loss over time, WHO and EU and the American Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics recommend lifestyle changes, including diets that reduce excess energy intake and improve food quality products [1].

Are you an adult with serious health problems because of your weight? Have you tried dieting and exercising but not losing enough weight? If you answered yes to these questions, prescription weight loss pills may be the option for you. Prescription drugs are drugs that your healthcare provider prescribes for you. You can't buy them off the shelf at the pharmacy like you can buy them without a prescription [2].

Lifestyle approaches to help people who are overweight or obese follow a healthy low-calorie diet and increase physical activity are always the first and foremost step in treating obesity. Unfortunately, for many people, losing weight is hard and maintaining the weight that has been lost is even harder. More than a third of Americans today are obese, meaning they have a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 30 or higher. Medicines are sometimes used to help with weight loss in obese people who are unable to lose weight or maintain weight loss with diet, exercise, or behavioral treatment. Weight loss pills are sometimes prescribed for people with a BMI between 27 and 30 if they have other health conditions such as diabetes, high cholesterol, heart disease, high blood pressure, or obstructive sleep apnea. Using medication along with lifestyle treatment improves weight loss results [3].

Prescription weight loss pills that you can take for longer than 12 weeks, known as long-term use, result in more significant weight loss than a non-drug inactive treatment, called a placebo. The combination of diet pills and lifestyle changes is more effective for weight loss than lifestyle changes alone. Taking these drugs for a year can result in a 3-12% greater reduction in total body weight than with lifestyle changes alone. It doesn't seem like much. But losing 5-10% of your total weight and maintaining it can have significant health benefits. For example, it can lower blood pressure, blood sugar, and levels of blood fats called triglycerides [2].

Nausea, constipation, and diarrhea, are some common mild side effects of using weight-loss drugs. They may fade over time. Rarely, serious side effects may occur. That's why it's so important to ask your healthcare provider about treatment options. And learn about the possible benefits and risks of each drug. Weight loss pills can be expensive and aren't always covered by insurance. Ask your insurance company about your coverage. Many people regain some of their lost weight when they stop taking weight loss pills. But adopting healthy lifestyle habits can help limit weight gain [2].

Six weight loss drugs have been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for long-term use: 1) Bupropion-naltrexone (Converse), 2) Liraglutide (Saxenda), 3) Orlistat (Xenical, Alli), 4) Phentermine-topiramate (Qsymia), 5) Semaglutide (Wegovy) and 6) Setmelanotide (Immovree). Most prescription weight loss drugs work by making you feel less hungry or fuller. Some do both. The exception is orlistat. It affects how your body absorbs fat [4].

It's important to have realistic expectations when starting any weight loss medication. The degree of weight loss is less than many people expect - about 5% to 10% of initial weight on average. However, everyone reacts differently, with some losing less weight and others losing more. Like other medications used for chronic conditions such as high blood pressure, obesity drugs don't work once they're stopped, so weight may return once they're stopped. Ask your doctor if you're wondering if a weight loss pill is right for you [3].

References

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