



THE COMPLETE GUIDE

GLP-1 Constipation: Relieve, Reset & Feel Good Again

Everything you need to understand, prevent, and relieve constipation caused by Ozempic, Wegovy, Mounjaro & other GLP-1 medications.

40%

of GLP-1 users
experience constipation

6+

evidence-based
relief strategies inside

24hr

fast relief
protocol included

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

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Medical Disclaimer: This guide is for informational purposes only and does not constitute medical advice. Always consult your healthcare provider before making changes to your treatment plan.

Why GLP-1 Medications Cause Constipation

Understanding the science behind the side effect

GLP-1 receptor agonists — including **semaglutide (Ozempic®, Wegovy®)**, **tirzepatide (Mounjaro®, Zepbound®)**, and others — work by mimicking a natural hormone called glucagon-like peptide-1. While they're remarkably effective for blood sugar control and weight loss, their mechanism has a significant effect on your digestive system.



The Science, Simply Explained

- 1 Slowed Gut Motility:** GLP-1 receptors are present throughout your GI tract. When activated by medication, they significantly slow down how fast food moves through your intestines — a process called gastric emptying.
- 2 Reduced Food & Fluid Intake:** These medications suppress appetite dramatically. Less food and fluid intake means less bulk and moisture in the colon — both essential for comfortable bowel movements.
- 3 Dehydration Risk:** Many users experience nausea and reduced thirst. Combined with lower fluid intake, this creates a perfect storm for dry, hard stools that are difficult to pass.
- 4 Altered Gut Microbiome:** Emerging research suggests GLP-1 medications may shift the balance of gut bacteria, which plays a role in digestive regularity.



By the numbers: Clinical trials show that **24–44%** of GLP-1 medication users report constipation as a side effect. It's most common in the first 4-8 weeks and during dose increases — but for many people, it persists throughout treatment.

Recognizing the Symptoms & Warning Signs

Know what's normal — and what requires medical attention

Common Symptoms

- Fewer than 3 bowel movements per week
- Hard, dry, or lumpy stools
- Straining during bowel movements
- Feeling of incomplete emptying
- Bloating and abdominal discomfort
- Stomach cramping or fullness

Warning Signs — See a Doctor

- No bowel movement for 5+ days
- Severe abdominal pain or cramps
- Blood in stool or rectal bleeding
- Fever alongside constipation
- Sudden, unexplained weight loss
- Vomiting that won't stop

The Bristol Stool Scale — Know Your Type

Healthcare providers use the Bristol Stool Scale (Types 1-7) to classify stool consistency. On GLP-1 medications, you may notice your stools shifting toward Types 1-2 (hard, lumpy). The goal is **Types 3-4** — smooth, sausage-shaped, and easy to pass.

Type 1: Separate lumps (severe)

Type 2: Lumpy sausage

Type 3-4: Ideal ✓

Type 5-7: Too loose

Hydration & Diet: The Foundation of Relief

The single most impactful change you can make

64–80

oz of water per day
(8-10 glasses minimum)

25–35g

fiber per day
(build up slowly)

Hydration Hacks That Work



Morning Ritual: Drink 16oz of warm water with a squeeze of lemon upon waking. This stimulates the gastrocolic reflex.



Time It Right: Drink fluids between meals, not during — drinking with meals can dilute digestive enzymes when appetite is already low.



Warm Beverages: Warm herbal teas (especially senna, peppermint, or ginger) help stimulate gut motility and provide hydration.



Electrolytes Matter: Add a pinch of sea salt or use electrolyte packets. Sodium helps water actually hydrate your cells, not just pass through.




Key insight: Because GLP-1 medications reduce appetite, most users accidentally become mildly dehydrated daily. Make hydration intentional — set hourly phone reminders if needed.

The Best Foods to Eat (and Foods to Avoid)

Your GLP-1 constipation food guide

Eat More Of These

 **Pears & Prunes**
Natural sorbitol draws water in

 **Leafy Greens & Broccoli**
High fiber, magnesium content

 **Beans & Lentils**
Soluble + insoluble fiber combo

 **Berries**
Fiber-rich with minimal calories

 **Kiwi Fruit**
Clinical trials show 2/day helps

 **Oats & Chia Seeds**
Soluble fiber gels & lubricates

 **Yogurt & Kefir**
Probiotics support gut motility

Limit or Avoid

 **High-Fat Red Meats**
Slows motility further

 **Refined White Carbs**
Zero fiber, constipating effect

 **Dairy (in excess)**
Can be constipating for some

 **Fried & Processed Foods**
Low fiber, high in saturated fat

 **Alcohol**
Dehydrates; amplifies side effects

 **Excess Caffeine**
Diuretic effect worsens dehydration

 **Artificial Sweeteners**
Can disrupt gut microbiome



Pro Tip: With reduced appetite on GLP-1 meds, prioritize fiber-dense foods over calorie-dense ones. A small portion of leafy greens, beans, or berries gives you far more digestive benefit per calorie than bread or meat.

Movement, Exercise & Gut Motility

How physical activity directly stimulates your bowels

Exercise is one of the most underrated constipation remedies. Physical movement directly stimulates peristalsis — the muscle contractions that move waste through your colon. Even light activity can make a significant difference.



Daily Walking — Most Effective

20-30 minutes of brisk walking after meals is clinically proven to speed up gut transit time. The rhythm of walking literally massages your intestines. This is your #1 movement tool.



Yoga Twists & Core Poses

Specific poses directly massage the digestive organs. Try: Wind-Relieving Pose (Pawanmuktasana), Seated Spinal Twist, Child's Pose, and Cat-Cow breathing. 10 minutes morning and night helps.




Low-Impact Cardio

Swimming, cycling, or light aerobics for 30 minutes 3-4x per week improves overall gut motility. Avoid high-intensity exercise if you're already feeling unwell from GLP-1 side effects.



Squatting Position for Bowel Movements

Using a toilet stool (like a Squatty Potty) to raise your feet 6-8 inches creates a more natural squatting angle that straightens the anorectal passage, making elimination significantly easier and more complete.

 **Target:** Aim for at least 7,000-10,000 steps per day. Research shows that sedentary individuals on GLP-1 medications have significantly worse constipation outcomes than those who stay active.

Supplements & Over-the-Counter Options

What works, what to try first, and what to avoid

FIRST-LINE OPTIONS (START HERE)

Magnesium Citrate
200-400mg at bedtime

Draws water into the bowel. Gentle, effective, and has the bonus of helping with sleep and muscle cramps common with GLP-1 use. **Most-recommended first step.**

Psyllium Husk
1 tsp in 8oz water, 1-3x daily

Soluble fiber that absorbs water and forms a gel, softening stools. Take with plenty of water or it can worsen constipation. Brands: Metamucil, Konsyl.

MiraLAX (PEG)
17g in 8oz liquid, once daily

Osmotic laxative. Draws water into the colon. Flavorless, dissolves in any liquid. Often recommended by GLP-1 prescribing doctors. Safe for regular use.

Probiotics
Daily, multi-strain formula

Strains *Lactobacillus acidophilus* and *Bifidobacterium longum* show benefit. Best taken consistently over weeks. Food-based sources (yogurt, kefir, kimchi) work too.

IF NEEDED — USE SHORT TERM

Dulcolax (Bisacodyl)
5-10mg, 1-3 nights only

Stimulant laxative — works within 6-12 hours. Use for acute relief only, not daily. Can cause dependency with regular use.

Docusate Sodium (Colace)
100-300mg daily

Stool softener that helps water and fats penetrate the stool. Gentle, non-stimulant. Good for preventing hard stools when starting GLP-1 therapy.



Always check with your pharmacist or doctor before adding new supplements — especially if you're taking other medications. Some laxatives can affect the absorption of GLP-1 medications.

The 24-Hour Relief Protocol

A step-by-step plan when you need relief now

7 AM

WAKE UP

Morning Trigger Routine

Drink 16oz warm water immediately. Take 200mg magnesium citrate with a small glass of warm lemon water. Do 5 minutes of gentle belly breathing and a seated spinal twist.

8 AM

BREAKFAST

Fiber-Loaded Breakfast

Oatmeal with 1 tbsp chia seeds + ½ cup berries + probiotic yogurt. Add 1 tsp psyllium husk mixed into a separate glass of water. Take with MiraLAX if you have it.

10 AM

MOVE

30-Minute Walk

Brisk walking stimulates the gastrocolic reflex. Sip 16oz of water during and after. This is often when things start moving.

12 PM

LUNCH

Gut-Supporting Lunch

Large salad with leafy greens, beans, avocado, and olive oil. Follow with a cup of peppermint or ginger tea. Keep drinking water — aim for 32oz by noon.

3 PM

SNACK

Prune Power Snack

4-5 prunes + 12oz water. Prunes contain sorbitol and dihydroxyphenyl isatin, which naturally stimulate intestinal muscles. Many people see results within 2-4 hours.

7 PM

DINNER

Light, High-Fiber Dinner

Vegetable soup with lentils or beans + 2 kiwi fruits for dessert. Senna herbal tea after dinner. Keep dinner small and fiber-rich.

9 PM

NIGHT

Overnight Reset

Take 200-400mg magnesium citrate. 10 minutes of yoga: Wind-Relieving pose, knees-to-chest. Sleep 7-8 hours — quality sleep regulates gut hormones. Expect movement in the morning.

When to Talk to Your Doctor

GLP-1 constipation is usually manageable — but sometimes you need professional support

Contact Your Doctor If...

- No bowel movement for 5+ consecutive days despite home remedies
- Severe abdominal pain, bloating, or cramping
- Blood in your stool or black/tarry stools
- Fever alongside constipation
- Nausea and vomiting that prevents eating or drinking
- Constipation isn't improving after 2-3 weeks of lifestyle changes

What to Tell Your Doctor

- ✓ Which GLP-1 medication and current dose
- ✓ How long you've had constipation
- ✓ All remedies you've already tried
- ✓ Your current water and fiber intake
- ✓ Any other medications you take
- ✓ Pain level and bowel movement frequency

Managing Your GLP-1 Dose

If constipation is severe, your doctor may consider **temporarily pausing the dose escalation** — staying at your current dose for longer before increasing. This is a common and accepted strategy that doesn't compromise your treatment outcomes.

In some cases, switching to a different GLP-1 medication may also help, as different drugs in this class have slightly different GI side effect profiles.

You're not alone in this

Constipation is one of the most common GLP-1 side effects — your doctor has heard this before. Don't hesitate to advocate for yourself. Managing side effects well means you can stay on your medication and continue making progress toward your health goals.

SUMMARY

Your Daily Constipation Relief Checklist



Hydration

- 16oz warm water on waking
- 64-80oz total fluids daily
- Herbal tea (peppermint/ginger)
- Limit caffeine & alcohol



Nutrition

- 25-35g fiber from whole foods
- Prunes, kiwi, or berries daily
- Beans/legumes at 1+ meal
- Probiotic food or supplement



Movement

- 20-30 min walk after meals
- 7,000+ steps total daily
- 5-10 min morning yoga
- Use a toilet stool



Supplements

- Magnesium citrate at bedtime
- Psyllium husk with water (1-3x)
- Daily probiotic supplement
- MiraLAX if needed (ask doctor)



You now have everything you need to feel well again.

GLP-1 constipation is real, common, and manageable. With the right knowledge and daily habits, most people see significant improvement within 1-2 weeks.

"Your medication is working hard to help you achieve your health goals. Help it along by giving your gut what it needs — hydration, fiber, movement, and a little patience."

— The FlowWell Team

FIND MORE RESOURCES AT

flowwell.bywillo.ai

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