

Your Semaglutide Guide

Plain-language answers to the questions patients ask most.

What is semaglutide, and how does it work?

Semaglutide is a once-weekly injection that copies GLP-1, a hormone your body already makes. It helps you feel full sooner, quiets hunger and food cravings, slows how quickly your stomach empties, and supports healthy blood sugar. Paired with nutritious eating and regular movement, most people lose weight steadily and gradually.

How do I take it?

One injection, once a week, on the same day each week. Any time of day works, with or without food.

- 1 Wash your hands and check your label.** Make sure the dose matches your written instructions.
- 2 Clean the vial top and your skin** with an alcohol wipe. Use a new, sterile syringe every time.
- 3 Prepare your exact dose** by following the instructions we gave you for your supply. Check for large air bubbles.
- 4 Inject just under the skin** of your stomach, thigh, or upper arm. Switch to a new spot each week.
- 5 Dispose of the syringe safely** in a sharps container. Never reuse or share needles or syringes.

Your dose needs to be exact

Always follow the dose written on your instructions. Doses are measured in **units** on a syringe, which is not the same as milligrams (mg). If anything seems unclear, **call us before you inject.**

My dose: _____

My injection day: _____

What to Expect

Why does my dose go up slowly?

You start low so your body can adjust, which helps limit side effects. Your provider raises the dose step by step based on how you feel. Everyone responds at their own pace, and gradual weight loss is the healthiest kind.

What if I miss a dose?

If your next scheduled dose is **more than 2 days (48 hours) away**, take the missed dose as soon as you remember. If your next dose is **less than 2 days away**, skip the missed dose and take your next one on schedule. Never double up. If you miss **two or more weeks** in a row, call us before you restart, because your dose may need to be lowered.

What side effects are common?

Most are mild to moderate and tend to ease as your body adjusts. They are most likely after a dose increase. The most common are:

Nausea

Diarrhea

Vomiting

Constipation

Stomach pain

Headache

Tiredness

Indigestion

Dizziness

Bloating

Belching

Gas

Heartburn

Hair thinning

How can I feel my best on treatment?

Eat smaller meals and stop as soon as you feel full.

Go easy on greasy, fried, or very sweet foods, which can trigger nausea.

Prioritize protein and do strength training to help protect muscle.

Eat slowly and chew well.

Sip water all day to stay hydrated, especially if you have nausea or diarrhea.

Limit alcohol, which can worsen nausea and upset your stomach.

Staying Safe

When should I call right away or get emergency help?

Serious side effects are uncommon, but please **stop your injections and contact us or seek care** if you notice any of these. For breathing trouble or swelling of the face or throat, call 911.

Severe stomach pain that will not go away, with or without vomiting. It may spread to your back.

Gallbladder trouble: upper stomach pain, fever, yellow skin or eyes, or pale, clay-colored stools.

A racing or pounding heartbeat that lasts for several minutes.

Changes in your vision, especially if you have diabetes.

Allergic reaction: swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; trouble breathing or swallowing; severe rash or itching; fainting.

Dehydration: vomiting or diarrhea that will not stop, very dark urine, or feeling faint.

A lump or swelling in your neck, hoarseness, or trouble swallowing.

Low blood sugar (if you take diabetes medicine): shakiness, sweating, confusion, fast heartbeat.

Who should not take semaglutide?

Please do not use it, and tell us right away, if:

- You or a family member has ever had **medullary thyroid cancer (MTC)**, or you have a condition called **MEN 2**.
- You have ever had a **serious allergic reaction** to semaglutide.
- You are **pregnant**, planning pregnancy, or **breastfeeding** (see page 4).
- You are already using **another semaglutide or GLP-1 medicine**. Never combine them.

Also tell us if you have had **pancreas, gallbladder, kidney, or stomach problems**, or **diabetic eye disease**.

Special Situations

What if I need surgery, a procedure, or anesthesia?

Semaglutide slows stomach emptying, so food or liquid can stay in your stomach longer, even after fasting. In rare cases this raises the risk of stomach contents entering the lungs during anesthesia or sedation. **Tell every provider you see** (surgeons, anesthesia teams, dentists, and endoscopy teams) that you take it. They may ask you to skip a dose or follow a special fasting plan beforehand.

What about pregnancy and breastfeeding?

Semaglutide may harm an unborn baby. If you are pregnant, think you might be, or are planning to become pregnant, tell us right away. You should **stop taking it at least 2 months before** trying to conceive. Please also talk with us before using it while breastfeeding.

Can I take it with my other medicines?

Often yes, but please give us a complete list of everything you take, including prescriptions, over-the-counter products, vitamins, and supplements. Because semaglutide slows stomach emptying, it can change how some medicines are absorbed. If you take **insulin or other diabetes medicines**, your doses may need to be adjusted to prevent low blood sugar.

Everyday Questions

How should I store my medicine and supplies?

Keep your medicine in the refrigerator unless your label says otherwise. Do not freeze it, and do not use it if it has been frozen. Keep it away from heat and direct sunlight. Check the discard date on your label and do not use it past that date. Always use a new syringe and needle for each injection, and never share them with anyone, even family.

How long will I be on it, and what if I stop?

Obesity is a long-term health condition, and many people continue treatment to keep their results. Weight often returns after stopping, so talk with us before you stop and we can make a plan together. We will check in regularly to review your progress and how you are feeling.

Questions? Vela Health by Rapid is here to help.

Phone: **847-867-1256**

Email: **admin@velahealth.live**

For emergencies, call 911. You can also report side effects to the FDA at [fda.gov/medwatch](https://www.fda.gov/medwatch) or 1-800-FDA-1088.