

Ozempic Could Reduce Heart Attack Risk



A recent analysis shows that semaglutide, a prescription drug (brand names Wegovy and Ozempic), may reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes in individuals, regardless of their weight loss success.

Prof John Deanfield from the UCL Institute of Cardiovascular Disease led the study. Researchers analysed data from the Semaglutide and Cardiovascular Outcomes (SELECT) trial, the largest and longest clinical trial on the effects of semaglutide in over 17,000 adults with overweight and obesity (without diabetes). The studied participants were over 44 and from 41 countries. This international study team explored the relationship between baseline weight measures, changes in weight during the study, and cardiovascular outcomes such as time to first major adverse cardiovascular event and heart failure measures.

The findings were presented at the European Congress on Obesity (ECO). The results indicate potential benefits of the drug on blood sugar, blood pressure, inflammation, and direct effects on heart muscle and vessels. The researchers believe the discovery of these drugs is similar to that of statins in the 1990s, suggesting semaglutide could similarly transform the treatment landscape for chronic age-related diseases.

Semaglutide is a GLP-1 medication primarily prescribed for adults with type 2 diabetes. It is also approved for weight loss in obese or overweight individuals who have at least one other health issue. The drug mimics the actions of the body's natural incretin hormones, aiding in lowering blood sugar levels post-meal. Modulating these hormone levels can also induce feelings of fullness, reducing daily calorie intake.

It is a prescription-only medicine and must be self-administered weekly. While effective in weight management—with 62% of patients losing more than 5% of their body weight after 20 weeks—experts caution it is not a standalone solution and should be used under medical supervision due to common side effects like nausea and potential weight regain post-treatment.

Despite the weight loss, the drug demonstrated reductions in heart attack, stroke, and heart failure risks across patients, regardless of their weight change. This highlights its potential role in addressing obesity-related medical conditions and improving outcomes for patients who struggle with weight management.

However, researchers caution against potential risks, including pancreatitis and rare thyroid cancers associated with its use.

Source: [UCL Institute of Cardiovascular Disease](#)

Image Credit: iStock

Published on : Wed, 22 May 2024