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# Dietary Recommendations with GLP-1s - Best Practices

Weight loss is one of the main goals of using a GLP-1 receptor agonist (such as Ozempic, Wegovy, Mounjaro R Zepbound). This means eating less - GLP-1s make this easier because they suppress appetite. In addition these drugs delay the emptying of the stomach after a meal leading to a feeling of fullness. In general it is recommended that when starting a GLP-1 you consider reducing the size of your servings by 50%.

Otherwise the goal shifts from "how much to eat" to "the quality of what you eat." Because these medications slow stomach emptying and suppress appetite, the "volume" of your food intake decreases, making nutrient density and side-effect management the top priorities.

Here are the established best practices for eating while on GLP-1 therapy.

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## 1. Prioritize Protein First

Weight loss from GLP-1s often includes a loss of muscle mass alongside fat. High protein intake is critical to protecting your lean muscle.

- **The Goal:** Aim for approximately **1.2 to 1.5 grams of protein per kilogram** of body weight (or roughly 0.55g per pound).
- **Best Sources:** Lean meats (chicken, turkey), fish, eggs, Greek yogurt, cottage cheese, tofu, and legumes.
- **Strategy:** Eat your protein **first** at every meal. If your appetite is extremely low, consider high-quality protein shakes (at least 20g protein/serving) to meet your targets.

## 2. Manage Side Effects through Food Choice

The most common side effects—nausea, reflux, and bloating—are often triggered by *what* and *how* you eat.

- **Avoid "Heavy" Foods:** High-fat, greasy, or deep-fried foods stay in the stomach longer and can cause severe nausea and indigestion.
- **Limit Added Sugars:** Highly processed sweets can cause blood sugar spikes and crashes, which may worsen "queasiness."

- **Be Careful with Spice:** Spicy or highly acidic foods (like citrus or heavy tomato sauces) can aggravate the heartburn many users experience.
- **Fiber is Your Friend (Usually):** To prevent constipation, aim for **25–35 grams of fiber** daily (berries, oats, beans). However, if you are feeling very bloated, opt for cooked vegetables instead of raw ones to make them easier to digest.

## 3. Adopt "Pacing" Habits

Because your stomach empties more slowly, the physical sensation of "fullness" can come on suddenly and uncomfortably.

- **Smaller, More Frequent Meals:** Instead of three large meals, try 5–6 "mini-meals" or snacks throughout the day.
- **Eat Slowly:** It takes the brain about 20 minutes to register fullness. Stop eating *before* you feel full; because of the medication, that "satisfied" feeling will continue to grow for several minutes after you stop.
- **The "Two-Hour Rule":** Avoid lying down for at least 2–3 hours after eating to prevent acid reflux.

## 4. Increased Hydration

GLP-1 medications can suppress your sense of thirst as well as hunger, increasing the risk of dehydration and kidney strain.

- **The Goal:** Aim for **4–6 cups (1-2 liters)** of fluid daily (higher recommendations are seen online, these we consider to be excessive)..
- **Electrolytes:** If you experience nausea or diarrhea, consider an electrolyte supplement to maintain balance.
- **Limit Alcohol:** Alcohol can worsen GI side effects and, when combined with these meds, may increase the risk of low blood sugar.

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