# Pharmacies in the UK set to offer weight loss injections after brief consultation



Reports indicate that weight loss injections such as Ozempic, Wegovy, and Mounjaro may soon be available to patients in the UK following a brief over-the-counter consultation at pharmacies. Currently, these medications are only accessible via NHS prescriptions to those assessed as having the highest clinical need, with NHS prescriptions priced at approximately £9.90 compared to around £150 for private purchases. This new development comes amid a two-year waiting list for Wegovy on the health service and the alarming statistic that roughly one-third of adults in England are classified as obese.

Experts suggest that making these injections available through pharmacies could enhance accessibility for millions of Britons who might benefit from them. An impending multi-million-pound agreement with a major pharmaceutical company is expected to launch a pilot scheme across the UK, as reported by the Daily Mail.

A government spokesperson commented on this potential shift, stating, “As the government shifts the NHS from sickness to prevention, we will be looking across the board at how these drugs can be made available to more people who can benefit from them.” The spokesperson further noted that the NHS is already employing innovative approaches to tackle obesity, utilising community care models and digital technologies to deliver these treatments as part of a comprehensive care package.

Pharmaceutical weight loss jabs, such as Mounjaro and Wegovy, function by mimicking a natural hormone that promotes a prolonged sense of fullness, leading to significant weight loss—with individuals reportedly shedding up to 15 per cent of their body weight within a few months of treatment. Estimates from the National Institute for Health Care and Excellence (NICE) suggest that around 3.4 million people could benefit from these medications.

However, health professionals have cautioned that obesity drugs should not be viewed as a “quick fix” and must be used under proper medical oversight. Thorrun Govind, a pharmacist and health expert, highlighted the importance of professional guidance, stating, “We must remember that whilst weight loss medications can play an important role in efforts to tackle obesity, they are not a quick fix, and they are not suitable for everyone.”

Govind went on to assert, “Pharmacists are highly trained, regulated professionals who are well-equipped to support patients in accessing treatments safely,” emphasising that making these medicines available through pharmacies could mitigate the risk of individuals seeking unsafe, unregulated alternatives.

Dr Leyla Hannbeck, chief executive of the Independent Pharmacies Association, also underlined the necessity of obtaining weight loss injections from trusted professionals rather than dubious online sources. She expressed her support for the initiative, asserting, “Community pharmacies are well-placed in providing this service and also advise patients on healthy lifestyle.” Dr Hannbeck added that weight loss should always occur with a healthcare professional’s face-to-face guidance to ensure patient safety.

According to estimates, obesity incurs a considerable cost to the NHS, approaching £6 billion annually, and is associated with numerous health risks, including type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and various cancers. The ongoing discussions about the role of weight loss injections reflect a growing recognition of the public health challenges posed by obesity in the UK.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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