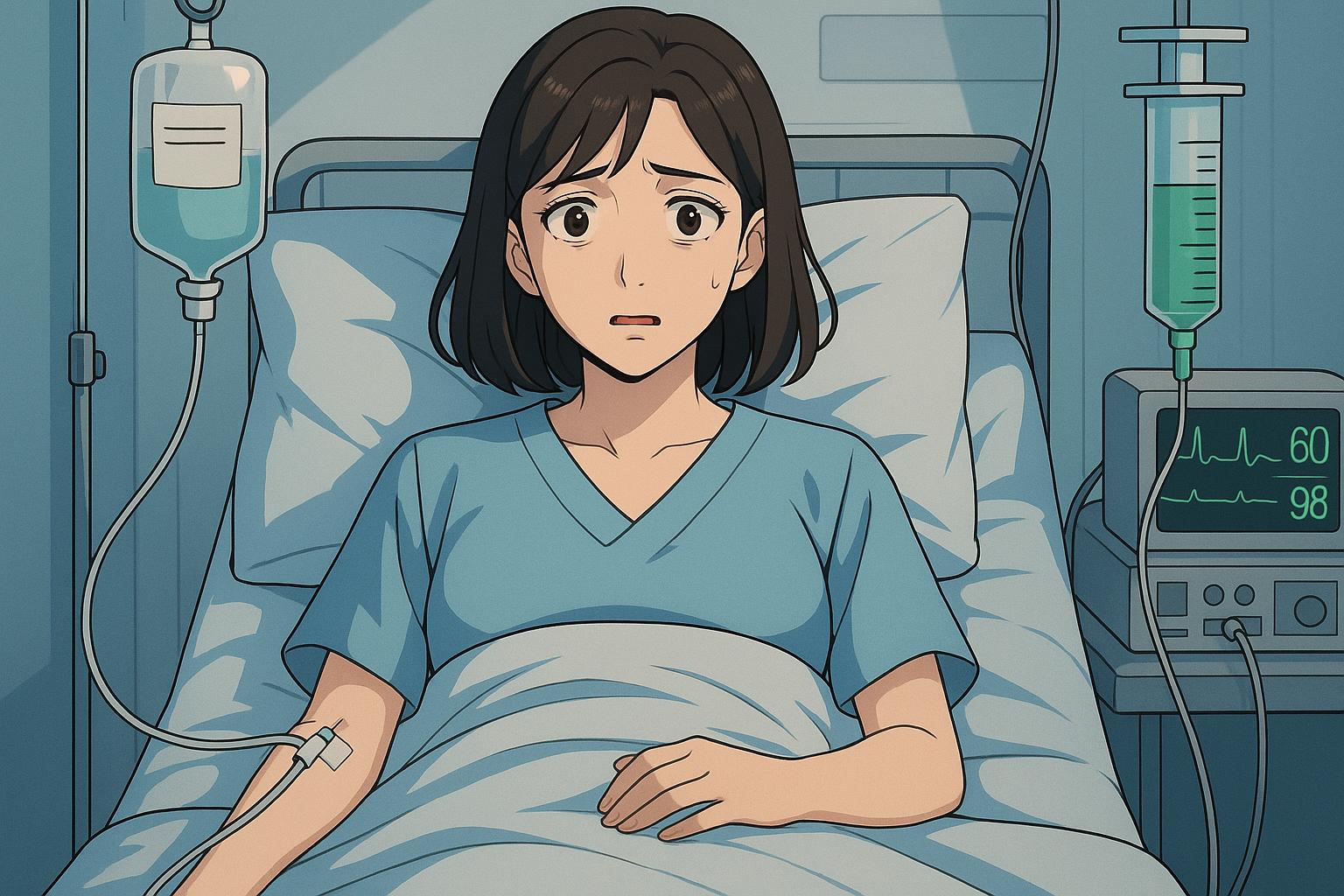
# Woman’s intensive care admission prompts crackdown on unregulated weight loss injections



A woman was recently admitted to intensive care after using a weight-loss injection sourced from a beauty salon, highlighting the potential dangers linked to unregulated weight-loss drugs. Upon her arrival at the hospital, she was treated for suspected internal injuries. Subsequently, North Yorkshire Police arrested two women, aged 32 and 37, on suspicion of administering a poison or a noxious substance, while a 58-year-old woman was taken into custody for allegedly supplying a prescription-only medicine, although she has since been released while under investigation.

This incident has captured attention amid a growing concern regarding the misuse of popular weight-loss medications such as Mounjaro and Wegovy, which, according to reports, have rapidly gained users across the UK, with estimates suggesting around 500,000 individuals are now employing these treatments. Although these medications can be effective for those with clinically significant obesity or diabetes, they are strictly regulated; only healthcare professionals can prescribe them after assessing a patient's health needs, including their BMI and associated conditions. NHS guidelines stipulate that these medications should be reserved for individuals with a BMI of 30 or higher or those who face additional weight-related health issues.

Health authorities, including Laura Angus, Chief Pharmacy Officer of NHS Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board, have warned consumers against procuring weight-loss medicines from private clinics or online platforms. She emphasised that these purchases come with significant risks, as the ingredients in unregulated products may not match those listed on packaging. "If you use such products, you could be putting your health at serious risk," Angus stated, advising individuals to consult healthcare professionals before considering any weight-loss treatments.

The Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency has reiterated the importance of obtaining weight-loss medications through legitimate channels. Andy Morling, deputy director of the agency's Criminal Enforcement division, underlined that weight-loss medicines are powerful and must be administered under proper medical supervision. He noted that non-compliant suppliers significantly heighten the risk of acquiring counterfeit or unlicensed products, which may not adhere to the UK's stringent safety standards.

In response to the increasing use of these drugs, regulatory bodies are tightening the rules regarding their prescription. The General Pharmaceutical Council has implemented new regulations that require healthcare providers to independently verify a patient's height, weight, and BMI before issuing prescriptions for obesity medications. These measures address concerns surrounding the improper dispensing of weight-loss drugs, which had previously been available through online assessments that lacked thorough verification processes. The introduction of such guidelines is part of a broader effort to mitigate the risks associated with these powerful medications, which have the potential for serious side effects.

Despite the tightening of regulations, shortages within the NHS complicate access to these medications. Although the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has approved Mounjaro for use in treating obesity within the NHS, many patients encounter barriers in accessing these essential treatments due to a lack of specialist weight management clinics. This situation is exacerbated by the high demand for medications like Wegovy, which has not received sufficient prescriptions compared to initial forecasts. As a result, some individuals may turn to private avenues, increasing the likelihood of obtaining unsafe or unverified products.

As the landscape of weight-loss medications continues to evolve, the need for strong regulatory frameworks is more pressing than ever. Awareness surrounding the risks associated with illegal sales is crucial for safeguarding public health. Health professionals urge individuals to seek credible information and support from validated medical sources to ensure safe and effective weight management strategies.

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14744375/Woman-intensive-care-using-weight-loss-jab-beauty-salon.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.ft.com/content/b9892513-636b-418e-b8d5-bc2df30bb41b> - This article discusses the surge in popularity of weight-loss injections like Mounjaro and Wegovy in the UK, with 500,000 users reported. It highlights the effectiveness of these drugs in weight reduction and treating conditions like heart disease. However, health authorities have introduced new regulations requiring verification of height, weight, and BMI by healthcare providers to prevent misuse. NHS England's national medical director cautions that these potent medications have potential side effects and should only be prescribed for obesity or diabetes, not as a quick fix.
3. <https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/uk-pharmacies-regulator-tightens-rules-prescribing-obesity-drugs-2025-02-04/> - The UK's General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) has tightened regulations for online pharmacies prescribing obesity drugs to prevent potential harm to patients. The GPhC updated its guidance for the first time in three years due to concerns about the dispensing of weight-loss medications. It has added the GLP-1 receptor agonist drug class, including Wegovy and Mounjaro, to its high-risk medicines list, requiring stricter measures for prescribing. Online pharmacies must now independently verify a patient's weight, height, and body mass index before prescribing weight-loss drugs, and online questionnaires or phone calls will no longer suffice. The stricter guidelines come in response to a surge in the private market for obesity drugs in the UK, with an estimated 500,000 people using them, often with concerning dispensing practices. The GPhC has taken enforcement action against several online pharmacies for their handling of weight-loss medications.
4. <https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/lilly-obesity-drug-mounjaro-to-be-offered-in-britains-nhs-after-watchdog-nod-2024-12-23/> - Eli Lilly's obesity drug Mounjaro will be available through Britain's National Health Service (NHS) starting in March following approval from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). Previously available only privately since its launch in February, Mounjaro is recommended for people with a BMI over 35 and at least one weight-related condition such as heart disease or type-2 diabetes, the same criteria set for Novo Nordisk’s Wegovy. The drug, a weekly injection, belongs to the GLP-1 analogues class, initially developed for type-2 diabetes but also effective in appetite suppression and promoting fullness, resulting in nearly 23% average weight loss in trials. Approximately 3.4 million people in the UK will be eligible for the treatment, which will cost the NHS £122 ($153) per month for the highest dose.
5. <https://www.ft.com/content/0b125a3c-6b82-4703-b8a8-e28f7f1aa3ea> - The National Health Service (NHS) in England is struggling to prescribe the weight-loss drug Wegovy due to a shortage of weight management clinics, prescribing it far less frequently than expected with only 3,300 prescriptions since September, compared to the 13,500 anticipated by the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (Nice). Demand for Wegovy is expected to grow after the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) approved its use to reduce the risk of serious heart problems or strokes in overweight adults. However, there is an international short supply of Wegovy as well as insufficient specialist weight-loss services, called 'tier 3' services, that are required to prescribe it. There are concerns that uneven access to these services may disadvantage poorer patients, pushing them to seek costly private alternatives. Wegovy's manufacturer, Novo Nordisk, has prioritized its diabetes drug Ozempic due to the supply constraints. Additionally, another weight-loss drug, Mounjaro by Eli Lilly, will soon be available through general practitioners (GPs) without the need for specialized weight management services, potentially improving access but also raising concerns about adequate support for patients.
6. <https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/britain-drug-cost-watchdog-says-it-will-recommend-lilly-obesity-drug-2024-12-05/> - The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) in the UK has announced its intention to recommend Eli Lilly's obesity drug Mounjaro for approximately 220,000 people over the next three years through the state health system. Mounjaro, which was launched in the UK in February but previously available only for out-of-pocket payments, will now be recommended for individuals with a BMI over 35 and at least one weight-related condition such as heart disease or type 2 diabetes. This guideline mirrors NICE's March 2023 recommendations for Wegovy, made by Novo Nordisk. Around 3.4 million individuals in England might be eligible under these criteria. Initially, those with the highest clinical need will be prioritized. NICE is expected to finalize its guidance by December 23, with the first NHS patients receiving the medication 90 to 180 days later. Mounjaro is a GLP-1 analogue, a class of drugs originally developed for type 2 diabetes but also found effective for weight loss. The drug showed an average weight reduction of nearly 23% in clinical trials. The phased rollout aims to ensure that healthcare providers can manage the overall health needs of all patients.
7. <https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/englands-nhs-offer-lillys-weight-loss-drugs-some-patients-2024-10-03/> - The NHS in England will introduce Eli Lilly's weight-loss drug, Mounjaro (known as Zepbound in the U.S.), to around 250,000 patients over three years, according to the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. Initially, the drug will target obese individuals with three weight-related health conditions—such as hypertension, sleep apnea, and cardiovascular issues—before eventually extending to those with two, and then one, of these conditions. This phased rollout involves testing new services, including digital technologies, to determine cost-effectiveness. The comprehensive plan includes support for diet and exercise through primary and secondary care clinics. This initiative responds to the high obesity rates in England, where about 64% of adults are overweight or obese. This follows the introduction of Novo Nordisk's Wegovy last year for weight management and cardiovascular risk reduction among overweight and obese adults.