

# UK investigates weight-loss jab risks after many hospitalised with pancreatitis

*The UK's MHRA and Genomics England have launched a groundbreaking study to investigate whether genetics play a role in developing acute pancreatitis after taking GLP-1 weight-loss drugs like Ozempic, Mounjaro, and Wegovy.*



*Image shows a box of Wegovy.*

A new study by the UK's Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and Genomics England is set to investigate whether genetic differences influence the risk of developing acute pancreatitis after using GLP-1 receptor agonist drugs — such as Ozempic, Mounjaro, and Wegovy — for weight loss and Type 2 diabetes.

According to Sky News, the UK's Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has received 181 reports of acute or chronic pancreatitis linked to the weight-loss drug Mounjaro, including five deaths.

The GLP-1 medications [Wegovy](#) and [Ozempic](#) have been associated with 113 reports of pancreatitis and one death, the outlet reported.

Sky News also noted that other, less commonly used GLP-1 drugs have similarly been linked to cases of pancreatitis and additional fatalities.

## **Genetic link to drug side effects**

The Yellow Card Biobank, the first of its kind, will collect genetic data from patients who have been hospitalised with acute pancreatitis suspected to be linked to GLP-1 medicines. These drugs, often called “skinny jabs,” mimic natural hormones that regulate appetite and blood sugar. Though rare, acute pancreatitis is a serious condition that has been reported in users.

“This is about preventing side effects before they happen,” said Dr Alison Cave, MHRA Chief Safety Officer. “Almost a third of side effects could be prevented with genetic testing. This study is a major step toward personalised medicine.”

## **How it works**

Patients hospitalised with acute pancreatitis while on GLP-1 medicines are being urged to report their experience through the Yellow Card scheme. Healthcare professionals are also being asked to report suspected cases and refer patients.

Once a Yellow Card is submitted, MHRA will contact eligible participants for the Biobank study. Participants will be asked to provide a saliva sample, sent by mail, to help identify genetic factors that may increase the risk of pancreatitis. The sample will be used by approved researchers to understand if side effects are linked to specific genetic traits.

## **What you need to know about GLP-1 medicines (“Skinny Jabs”)**

What they are: GLP-1 receptor agonists (GLP-1s) like Ozempic, Wegovy, [Mounjaro](#), and Rybelsus help regulate appetite and blood sugar by mimicking a natural hormone. Some, like Mounjaro, also act on a second hormone.

In the UK, GLP-1s are licensed only for people with obesity or Type 2 diabetes. Using them for cosmetic [weight loss](#) is not approved.

These drugs must be prescribed by a healthcare professional after proper consultation. They are available via the NHS (in select cases) or privately through legitimate clinics.

Never buy from unregulated sources like beauty salons or social media. Fake or unauthorized GLP-1 products can cause serious side effects. Only trust pharmacies with prescriptions.

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