

# Eli Lilly's weight-loss drug succeeds in trials with sleep apnea patients

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London: Eli Lilly's weight-loss drug helped cut the frequency of irregular breathing in patients with obstructive sleep apnea by as much as 63 per cent on average across two late-stage trials, the company said on Wednesday. Weight-loss drugs such as Lilly's

Zepbound and Novo Nordisk's Wegovy, called GLP-1 agonists, have already brought in billions of dollars in sales as treatments for obesity and diabetes.

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Millions of people already take Lilly's GLP-1 drugs, sold as Zepbound for obesity and Mounjaro for type 2 diabetes, but Wednesday's data could pave the way to expand their use for a new set of patients. In one of the Lilly studies, patients received only tirzepatide, the active ingredient in Zepbound and Mounjaro, and showed a 55 per cent improvement in symptoms of the disease, compared with a 5 per cent improvement in patients who received a placebo.

The second study tested the drug in combination with a device known as continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) therapy and patients showed a 62.8 per cent drop in events of irregular breathing on average. Lilly said it plans to submit data to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and other global regulatory agencies beginning mid-year.

Obstructive sleep apnea affects roughly 1 billion people globally, according to a 2019 study published in The Lancet. Symptoms of the disease were measured using Apnea-Hypopnea Index (AHI) across the studies, which quantifies the presence and severity of partial or complete obstructions of airways experienced by a patient during their sleep.

(Reporting by Bhanvi Satija in Bengaluru; Editing by Sriraj Kalluvila and Shinjini Ganguli)

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