

THE 2026 STATE OF OBESITY TREATMENT REPORT

HOW PATIENTS VIEW GLP-1 MEDICATIONS

GLP-1 MEDICATIONS HAVE RESHAPED THE CONVERSATION AROUND OBESITY TREATMENT, BUT PATIENT EXPECTATIONS AND REAL-WORLD EXPERIENCES ARE STILL EVOLVING.

A NATIONAL SURVEY OF PATIENTS WITH OVERWEIGHT OR OBESITY, MOST OF WHOM HAVE TRIED GLP-1S OR OTHER OBESITY MEDICATIONS, SHOWS THAT WHILE PATIENTS VIEW THESE DRUGS AS MEANINGFUL PROGRESS, THEY DO NOT SEE THEM AS A COMPLETE SOLUTION. INSTEAD, RESPONDENTS CONSISTENTLY POINTED TO THE NEED FOR CLEARER EDUCATION, LONG-TERM CARE STRATEGIES, AND GUIDANCE FROM HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS.



GLP-1S ARE SEEN AS PROGRESS, NOT A CURE

54%

54% say GLP-1 medications are a big step forward

33%

Only 33% believe they are a complete solution

81%

81% say obesity is a long-term health condition requiring ongoing care

EDUCATION CHANGES HOW PATIENTS APPROACH TREATMENT

When patients are presented with clearer information about GLP-1 risks and alternatives:



27% say they would seek more information before deciding



26% say they would reconsider whether GLP-1s are the right option

These findings suggest education helps move patients from hype toward more deliberate, informed treatment decisions.

THE EXPECTATION GAP

GLP-1 medications have generated enormous public attention, but patients themselves increasingly recognize they are not a standalone solution. Most respondents view GLP-1s as meaningful progress while still seeing obesity as a condition that requires ongoing management and long-term care.

CONFIDENCE DOESN'T ALWAYS MEAN UNDERSTANDING

Many patients believe they understand GLP-1 risks, but knowledge gaps remain.

65%

say they feel confident in their understanding of GLP-1 risks

45%

say they are fully aware of risks (i.e. muscle or bone density loss)

37%

say they have limited understanding of these risks

17%

say they are entirely unaware

DOCTORS REMAIN THE MOST TRUSTED SOURCE

Despite increasing direct-to-consumer marketing and online discussion around GLP-1 medications, patients continue to rely on clinicians for guidance.

Respondents most frequently identified primary care physicians and specialists as their most trusted sources of unbiased information about GLP-1 medications and obesity treatment.

PHYSICIANS REMAIN CENTRAL TO CARE

Even as GLP-1 medications are widely discussed across social media, advertising, and direct-to-consumer platforms, patients still turn to physicians for trusted guidance when making treatment decisions.

THE EDUCATION GAP

Many patients report feeling confident about GLP-1 medications, but awareness of specific risks varies widely. The findings suggest that clearer education about treatment risks and alternatives could help patients make more informed decisions about obesity care.

GLP-1 medications are changing obesity care, but patients increasingly recognize that long-term treatment requires more than a single drug. The survey findings highlight the importance of clinician guidance, clearer education about risks and options, and more personalized approaches that reflect the biological differences driving obesity.

As obesity treatment evolves, patients are looking for care models that combine innovation with informed, individualized decision-making.