



**TENNESSEE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION
WARNS CONSUMERS OF COUNTERFEIT WEIGHT LOSS DRUGS**

NASHVILLE—The Tennessee Attorney General's Office is warning consumers about scams related to popular weight-loss drugs Ozempic, Wegovy, Mounjaro, and Zepbound (GLP-1 drugs). The skyrocketing consumer demand for these medications plus the high price tag and tight supplies have created opportunities for scammers to cash in. Before seeking out alternative sources for these medications, consumers should be aware of the risks.

In the United States, you must have a prescription to purchase GLP-1 drugs. Scammers might claim that they can supply the drugs without a prescription (and might pose as doctors or pharmacies from foreign countries). Others might post on social media or spam your inbox with offers to deliver the drug at a fraction of the price. Don't fall for it. The scammer could take your money (and personal data) and disappear. Or the "medication" they send might not be legitimate, but rather some dangerous or ineffective alternative.

Online health/wellness companies might try to bypass prescription requirements by offering to sell the active ingredient of GLP-1 drugs (semaglutide or tirzepatide) and marketing them as "not for human consumption" or for "research purposes only." But these websites often provide consumers with tips on how to use the active ingredients to make their own versions of GLP-1 drugs at home. There is no guarantee that the active ingredients they're selling are uncontaminated, the correct dosage, or even that they're actually semaglutide or tirzepatide. Preparing your own medications is also dangerous because it's easy to accidentally contaminate the materials or make mistakes in the dosage, raising the risk of serious or even deadly side effects.

Some consumers may turn to compounding pharmacies to fill their prescriptions. While these pharmacies are allowed to compound certain medications when the Food and Drug Administration ("FDA") declares a shortage, the FDA does not evaluate compounded drugs for safety, quality, or effectiveness. Nontraditional health providers like med spas, wellness centers, and online retailers are typically selling consumers these untested, compounded versions of GLP-1 drugs. Unscrupulous companies also advertise alternative formulations of GLP-1 drugs, like nasal sprays or products for children, that have never been subjected to clinical testing for safety or effectiveness.

We urge you not to use GLP-1 drugs without a prescription. If you do have a prescription, we urge you to fill it only from a reliable pharmacy. It may be tempting to seek out alternative channels when pharmacies have a shortage or when prices are high, but doing so can be very dangerous to your health.



Below are some questions to ask yourself before purchasing semaglutide or tirzepatide products from a med spa, wellness center, online seller, compounding pharmacy, or outsourcing facility. If the answer is “yes” to any of them, the product may be counterfeited, contaminated, or otherwise unsafe.

- Is the seller offering tirzepatide or semaglutide without a prescription or without the supervision of a licensed healthcare provider?
- Is the seller offering research-grade, research-use-only, or tirzepatide or semaglutide intended for research?
- Does the seller encourage consumers to reconstitute (add liquid) the tirzepatide or semaglutide?
- Does the seller encourage consumers to break apart Mounjaro, Zepbound, Wegovy, or Ozempic pens/vials to use them as separate doses or to make watered down doses from vials?
- Is the tirzepatide or semaglutide mixed with other medicines, chemicals or other ingredients?
- Is the seller offering tirzepatide or semaglutide offered in forms that differ from the FDA-approved products (e.g., drops, lozenges or films taken under the tongue, nasal sprays, or topical skin patches)?
- Is the seller promoting tirzepatide/semaglutide to consumers under age 18?
- Is the seller offering tirzepatide or semaglutide without disclosing potential side effects or safety risks?
- Is the seller making inaccurate or unsubstantiated claims about tirzepatide’s or semaglutide’s safety and efficacy?
- Is the seller offering to sell more than three months of tirzepatide or semaglutide at once?
- Did the tirzepatide or semaglutide originate from a seller in another country?
- Is the tirzepatide or semaglutide being offered by an individual person, including on social media?
- Does the seller encourage consumers to lie to obtain the tirzepatide or semaglutide, including by misrepresenting their weight, health conditions or BMI?

For more information, please visit <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/postmarket-drug-safety-information-patients-and-providers/fdas-concerns-unapproved-glp-1-drugs-used-weight-loss>

If you believe you’re experiencing any type of poison emergency, call Tennessee Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222.

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