

# press release

## Higher dose Wegovy® demonstrates nearly 28% weight loss in early responders according to new analyses presented at the European Congress on Obesity

- Early responders (15% or more weight loss after 24 weeks) to the higher dose of Wegovy® (semaglutide 7.2 mg) achieved on average 27.7% mean weight loss at week 72 in the STEP UP trial<sup>1</sup>
- Participants treated with the higher dose of Wegovy® reached weight loss goals faster as compared to semaglutide 2.4 mg<sup>1</sup>
- The majority of the weight loss comes from losing body fat: 84% of weight loss with Wegovy® (semaglutide 2.4 and 7.2 mg) can be attributed to reductions in fat mass, while preserving muscle function and improving muscle health<sup>2</sup>

**Bagsværd, Denmark, 12 May 2026** – Novo Nordisk is presenting a new sub-analysis from the large clinical trial STEP UP at the European Congress on Obesity (ECO) on 12-15 May in Istanbul, Türkiye, showing that the higher dose of the weight loss drug Wegovy® is highly effective at helping people with obesity lose significant amounts of weight regardless of how quickly their body responds to the treatment<sup>1</sup>.

Moreover, a separate STEP UP sub-analysis presented at ECO shows that most of the weight loss with Wegovy® was coming from body fat, and most of the muscle mass was kept<sup>2</sup>.

The STEP UP trial in people with obesity tested the higher dose of semaglutide (7.2 mg) against the 2.4 mg dose and placebo over 72 weeks in over 1,400 adults living with obesity without type 2 diabetes<sup>3</sup>. The results were striking. On average, people taking the 7.2 mg dose lost 21% of their total body weight – the equivalent of around 23 kg for the average person in the trial who weighed 113 kg before starting treatment with semaglutide<sup>3</sup>. People on the 2.4 mg dose lost

about 17.5% within 72 weeks, while those on the placebo lost 2.4%<sup>3</sup>. The 21% weight loss with semaglutide 7.2 mg was achieved with a safety and tolerability profile consistent with the 2.4 mg semaglutide dose<sup>3</sup>.

A new analysis has revealed insights into how fast and how much weight loss people who respond differently can expect, and the findings are presented at ECO. ‘Early responders’ were identified as people who lost 15% or more of their body weight within just the first 24 weeks (about 6 months) of treatment<sup>1</sup>. About 1 in 4 people (27%) taking the 7.2 mg dose of Wegovy<sup>®</sup> had an early response, compared with about 1 in 5 (21%) on the 2.4 mg dose and 3% on placebo<sup>1</sup>. The early responder group lost 27.7% of their body weight at week 72<sup>1</sup>.

### STEP UP weight-loss results<sup>1,3</sup>

	Semaglutide 7.2 mg	Semaglutide 2.4 mg	Placebo
<b>STEP UP primary results</b>			
Average weight loss % across all groups	20.7%	17.5%	2.4%
<b>STEP UP sub-analysis</b>			
Average weight loss % in early responders (≥15% loss by week 24)	27.7% (in 26.9% of participants)	24.8% (in 20.9% of participants)	-
Average weight loss in Responders (excluding early responders)	15.4%	13.2%	-

“Obesity as a chronic disease demands lifelong, holistic treatment. Early weight loss may indicate who is likely to achieve the most weight loss from semaglutide – but it is important to highlight that those without an ‘early’ treatment response still experience a substantial and clinically meaningful weight loss. These new insights from the STEP UP sub-analysis presented at ECO can help healthcare professionals with managing expectations and setting goals with their patients when initiating obesity medications and potentially support long-term persistence to treatments,” said Dr Dror Dicker, associate clinical professor of Internal Medicine at The Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Tel-Aviv University, Israel.

### Improved muscle health

Another secondary analysis from a sub-population (55 participants) in the STEP UP trial studied body scan images (MRI) showing that 84% of the lost weight with semaglutide (2.4 and 7.2 mg) was due to a reduction in fat mass<sup>2</sup>. The abdominal visceral fat was reduced by over 30% with

semaglutide<sup>2</sup>. Muscle mass was reduced by only 10% compared to baseline with semaglutide, and importantly, this was accompanied by improved muscle health, as assessed by the amount of muscle fat<sup>2</sup>. Both visceral and muscle fat are highly associated with the risk of cardiometabolic complications<sup>4-6</sup>. This means the drug was highly effective at specifically targeting fat in different body depots. Importantly, participants taking semaglutide maintained their functional muscle strength, even as they lost significant weight<sup>2</sup>. Muscle function was measured using a 30-second sit-to-stand test, which showed the same functional muscle strength in both the semaglutide and placebo groups before and after treatment<sup>2</sup>. Together, these results underscore the healthy improvements seen with semaglutide in body composition and muscle function<sup>2</sup>.

"The analyses from STEP UP presented at ECO are really promising, further highlighting the potential of the higher dose of Wegovy<sup>®</sup> to achieve substantial weight loss. Importantly, for individuals focused on losing weight, the goal is often to reduce fat rather than muscle mass. These studies show that weight loss with Wegovy<sup>®</sup> is predominantly driven by reductions in fat, while muscle function is preserved. This is great news for people living with obesity," said Emil Kongshøj Larsen, executive vice president and head of International Operations at Novo Nordisk.

The results of the STEP UP sub-analysis of semaglutide's improvement of body composition have been submitted for publication to a scientific journal.

### **About Wegovy<sup>®7,8</sup>**

Wegovy<sup>®</sup> is approved as once-daily Wegovy<sup>®</sup> pill (semaglutide 25 mg) by the FDA and once-weekly Wegovy<sup>®</sup> injection (2.4 mg and 7.2 mg) by the FDA, EMA and other regulatory authorities worldwide. The Wegovy<sup>®</sup> pill is currently pending marketing approval from the EMA and other regulatory authorities.

Wegovy<sup>®</sup> is indicated to reduce excess body weight and maintain weight reduction long term in adults with obesity or overweight and in the presence of at least one weight-related comorbid condition, and approved by the FDA to reduce the risk of major adverse cardiovascular events, such as death, heart attack or stroke in adults with known heart disease and either obesity or overweight. Furthermore, Wegovy<sup>®</sup> injection is indicated to reduce excess body weight and maintain long-term weight reduction in paediatric patients aged 12 years and older. It is approved by the FDA for the treatment of MASH in adults with moderate to advanced liver scarring (fibrosis), but not in those with cirrhosis of the liver.

### **About the STEP UP trials<sup>3,9</sup>**

Novo Nordisk has completed two trials, STEP UP and STEP UP T2D, investigating the efficacy and safety of semaglutide 7.2 mg in people with obesity with or without type 2 diabetes. The 72-

week STEP UP trial was a randomised, double-blinded, parallel-group, placebo-controlled, superiority trial designed to evaluate the efficacy and safety of semaglutide 7.2 mg compared to semaglutide 2.4 mg and placebo as an adjunct to lifestyle intervention. The trial included 1,407 adults with a BMI  $\geq 30$  kg/m<sup>2</sup> without diabetes. The primary objective was to demonstrate the superiority of semaglutide 7.2 mg against placebo on weight loss. Key confirmatory secondary endpoints included the number of participants achieving 10%, 15%, 20% and 25% weight loss, respectively. The 72-week STEP UP T2D trial investigated semaglutide 7.2 mg in 512 adults with obesity and type 2 diabetes, with the primary objective to demonstrate superiority of semaglutide 7.2 mg against placebo on weight loss.

### About Novo Nordisk

*Novo Nordisk is a leading global healthcare company founded in 1923 and headquartered in Denmark. Our purpose is to drive change to defeat serious chronic diseases built upon our heritage in diabetes. We do so by pioneering scientific breakthroughs, expanding access to our medicines and working to prevent and ultimately cure disease. Novo Nordisk employs about 67,900 people in 80 countries and markets its products in around 170 countries. For more information, visit [novonordisk.com](http://novonordisk.com), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).*

### Contacts for further information

#### Novo Nordisk Media:

**Ambre James-Brown**

+45 3079 9289

[globalmedia@novonordisk.com](mailto:globalmedia@novonordisk.com)

**Liz Skrbkova (US)**

+1 609 917 0632

[usmediarelations@novonordisk.com](mailto:usmediarelations@novonordisk.com)

#### Novo Nordisk Investors:

**Michael Novod**

+45 3075 6050

[nvno@novonordisk.com](mailto:nvno@novonordisk.com)

**Jacob Martin Wiborg Rode**

+45 3075 5956

[jrde@novonordisk.com](mailto:jrde@novonordisk.com)

**Sina Meyer**

+45 3079 6656

[azey@novonordisk.com](mailto:azey@novonordisk.com)

**Max Ung**

+45 3077 6414

[mxun@novonordisk.com](mailto:mxun@novonordisk.com)

**Christoffer Sho Togo Tullin**

+45 3079 1471

[cftu@novonordisk.com](mailto:cftu@novonordisk.com)

**Alex Bruce**

+45 3444 2613

[axeu@novonordisk.com](mailto:axeu@novonordisk.com)

**Mads Berner Bruun**

+45 3075 2936

[mbbz@novonordisk.com](mailto:mbbz@novonordisk.com)

**Frederik Taylor Pitter (US)**

+1 609 613 0568

[fpitr@novonordisk.com](mailto:fpitr@novonordisk.com)

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