GLP-1s' Present Clinical and Coverage Challenges for Older Adults

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GLP-1s (e.g., Ozempic) have been widely praised for their use in treating Type 2 diabetes and for their weight loss benefits. However, new reporting indicates that older adults are stopping these drugs at unusually high rates, often within just a few months of starting them. Many adults 65 and older discontinue GLP 1s due to high costs and limited insurance coverage, particularly because Medicare generally does not cover these medications when prescribed solely for weight loss. Others stop because of gastrointestinal side effects and concerns about losing muscle and other lean mass, a risk that is especially significant for older adults who already experience age related declines in muscle strength. As a result, many older patients who discontinue GLP 1 therapy regain weight and lose associated health benefits, underscoring the need for careful clinical monitoring and more sustainable coverage pathways for this population.