

IMA Warns of Unknown Long-Term Risks of New Weight-Loss Drugs

The Indian Medical Association (IMA) has issued a strong caution regarding the growing use of new weight-loss medications such as Wegovy (semaglutide) and Mounjaro (tirzepatide).

Key Concerns

- **Long-Term Safety Unknown** – Current studies do not provide clarity on possible chronic complications of these drugs. IMA states that “we do not know their long-term effects.”
- **Risk of Misuse** – Reports suggest off-label use by non-specialists (cosmetologists, AYUSH practitioners) and by patients through grey markets, often for cosmetic weight loss.
- **Side Effects Emerging** – Nausea, vomiting, gallstones, pancreatitis, gastroparesis, muscle loss, and in some rare cases, mental health issues like depression or suicidal thoughts have been noted.
- **Dependency Concern** – Stopping the drug often leads to weight regain, raising doubts about sustainability.

IMA Recommendations

- **Strict Medical Oversight** – Prescriptions should be limited to qualified endocrinologists/diabetologists.
- **Lifestyle First** – Emphasis on dietary changes, exercise, and behavioral therapy as the core of obesity management.
- **Patient Education** – Users must be fully informed of risks and the lack of long-term safety data.
- **Regulatory Action** – Stronger monitoring is needed to prevent off-label and cosmetic misuse.

Why This Matters

With rising obesity rates in India, weight-loss drugs are being hailed as a quick solution. However, experts stress that without robust safety data and proper medical supervision, these medications could create new health crises.