



Lilly's tirzepatide gives Novo Nordisk's semaglutide a run for the money in Phase 3 trial

By [Brian Buntz](#) | April 28, 2022



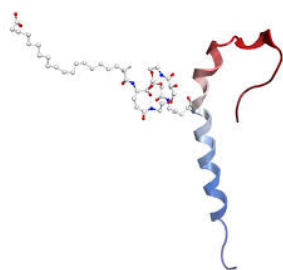
Eli Lilly and Co. (NYSE: LLY) has announced that tirzepatide enabled trial participants to lose up to 22.5% of their body weight in the SURMOUNT-1 study.

Study volunteers receiving tirzepatide lost up to 52 lb. (24 kg) in the 72-week Phase 3 trial. A total of 55% of those receiving a 10 mg dose lost at least 20% of their body weight while 63% of those on a 15 mg dose hit the same benchmark. Only 1.3% of those taking placebo had the same level of weight loss.

Tirzepatide is a glucose-dependent insulintropic polypeptide (GIP) receptor and glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) receptor antagonist.

It is thus broadly similar to Novo Nordisk's semaglutide, a glucagon-like peptide 1 (GLP-1) receptor antagonist that has achieved strong growth in diabetes as Rybelsus. Demand appeared to be strong for Wegovy, an injectable semaglutide formulation that won FDA approval for supporting weight management in June 2021, but the **drug has faced supply challenges in the U.S.**

A report in **NEJM** found that semaglutide recipients on a reduced calorie diet lost 14.9% of their body weight after 68 weeks.



The tirzepatide molecule is a 39 amino acid linear peptide conjugated to a C20 fatty acid moiety. Tirzepatide image from Lilly.

Tirzepatide outperformed popular diabetes drugs in head-to-head clinical trials, **according to a GlobalData from 2021**

In Lilly's SURMOUNT-1 study, tirzepatide reached both co-primary endpoints related to mean percent change in body weight from baseline and weight loss of at least 5% relative to placebo.

"Obesity is a chronic disease that often does not receive the same standard of care as other conditions, despite its impact on physical, psychological and metabolic health, which can include increased risk of hypertension, heart disease, cancer and decreased survival," said Dr. Louis J. Aronne, investigator of SURMOUNT-1, in a news release. "Tirzepatide delivered impressive body weight reductions in SURMOUNT-1, which could represent an important step forward for helping the patient and physician partnership

treat this complex disease."

LLY shares ticked up 4% to \$297.27 after announcing the news. Novo Nordisk dipped by about 1% to \$110.19.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Brian Buntz

As the pharma and biotech editor at WTW Media, Brian has almost two decades of experience in B2B media, with a focus on healthcare and technology. While he has long maintained a keen interest in AI, more recently Brian has made making data analysis a central focus, and is exploring tools ranging from NLP and clustering to predictive analytics.

Throughout his 18-year tenure, Brian has covered an array of life science topics, including clinical trials, medical devices, and drug discovery and development. Prior to WTW, he held the title of content director at Informa, where he focused on topics such as connected devices, cybersecurity, AI and Industry 4.0. A dedicated decade at UBM saw Brian providing in-depth coverage of the medical device sector. Engage with Brian on LinkedIn or drop him an email at bbuntz@wtwhmedia.com.

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