

Women's Health

Ozempic May Be Able To Treat Hidradenitis Suppurativa: Doctors Explain

The findings are “not surprising,” one dermatologist says.

BY [KORIN MILLER](#) PUBLISHED: SEP 26, 2024 3:34 PM EDT



Hidradenitis suppurativa is a chronic inflammatory skin condition that impacts up to two percent of people in the U.S. (That's roughly 6.5 million people.) But while the condition can be incredibly uncomfortable—causing skin abscesses that lead blood and pus—most people aren't even aware it exists.

Now, new research finds that semaglutide medications like Ozempic and Wegovy can help treat hidradenitis suppurativa in people with obesity.

Semaglutide is being researched as a potential treatment for a range of health conditions— including everything from heart disease to substance use disorder—but what’s the connection between the medication and your skin? Dermatologists break it down.

What did the study find?

For the study, which was presented at the European Academy of Dermatology and Venerology (EADV) in September 2024, researchers analyzed data for 30 patients with obesity who also had various stages of hidradenitis suppurativa (HS). The patients received a once-weekly dose of semaglutide for an average of 8.2 months.

Why Women May Lose More Weight On Ozempic

The researchers discovered that the patients had less HS flare-ups over time, with the frequency of flares dropping from once every 8.5 weeks to once every 12 weeks. Patients also said that their quality of life improved.

Can Ozempic treat HS?

It’s hard to say for sure based on the results of one small study, but the findings are promising.

Gary Goldenberg, MD, a dermatologist practicing in New York City, says the findings are “not surprising.” He adds, “Like many inflammatory skin conditions, many patients with HS are overweight and have insulin resistance or diabetes. So, it would make sense that medication that improves insulin resistance and decreases patients weight helps with HS.”

“Obesity triggers low-grade, chronic inflammation, and that makes HS worse,” adds Ife J. Rodney, MD, founding director of Eternal Dermatology + Aesthetics. But semaglutides may help lower that inflammation, Dr. Rodney says. “While there’s not a whole lot of data yet, I can definitely see how Ozempic can help,” she says.

What should I do if I have HS?

If you have HS, it’s important to see a dermatologist. They may recommend treatments like topical or oral antibiotics, steroid medications or injections, and even biologic injectable medications, Dr. Rodney says.

“Even if it’s mild, see your dermatologist sooner rather than later,” Dr. Rodney says. “We have options to help control it.”

SOURCE:

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