

WEIGHT LOSS MEDICATIONS:

Quick Guide for Health Care Providers

When to Add Medication

- BMI ≥ 30 kg/m²
- BMI ≥ 27 kg/m²
- Lack of response to lifestyle changes.

Weight Loss Medications Listed in ADA Standards of Care

Medication	Key Points	~Monthly Cost
Phentermine	Lost cost; short-term use	~\$43
Orlistat	Modest effectiveness	~\$58 (OTC) \$675 (Rx)
Phentermine/Topiramate ER	Effective combination	~\$238
Naltrexone/Bupropion ER	Useful for cravings	~\$750
GLP-1 RA & GLP-1RA/GIP	Highest efficacy	~\$1,300-\$1,600

Clinical Pearls

- Individualize treatment.
- Start low, titrate gradually.
- Monitor weight, engagement, and side effects.
- Aim for 5-10% weight loss (clinically meaningful).
- Use non-stigmatizing, person-centered language.

Bottom Line

- GLP-1 medications are effective but not always accessible.
- Alternative weight loss medications are important tools.
- Long-term success requires:
 - Lifestyle support
 - Medication when appropriate
 - Addressing social barriers
 - Ongoing follow-up

Read more about Obesity and Weight Management for the Prevention and Treatment of Diabetes in Section 8 of the ADA's 2026 Standards of Care. ([URL link](#))



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