



# Identifying Barriers and Improving Adherence with the Use of Injectable GLP-1 Receptor Agonists

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## BACKGROUND

- GLP-1 Receptor Agonists are injectable medications used for Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM) and obesity.
- These drugs enhance insulin release, reduce glucose levels, slow gastric emptying, and promote weight loss.
- Increased media coverage and patient demand have led to drug shortages, impacting adherence.
- Common barriers to adherence include medication access challenges, high drug costs, and intolerable gastrointestinal side effects.

## METHODS

### Study Design & Setting

- This study was conducted at SSM Health Outpatient Pharmacy at St. Louis University Hospital.
- A cross-sectional survey was used to assess patient adherence and barriers to GLP-1 receptor agonists.

### Patient Selection & Data Collection

- Patient records were accessed to identify individuals who filled a GLP-1 prescription within the past year- a total of 190 patients were identified.
- The survey was conducted via phone interviews, and participants provided verbal consent before proceeding.
- 63 patients participated, with responses recorded manually in a secure spreadsheet.

### Survey Design

- The survey collected demographic information, prescription details, insurance coverage, access issues, and adherence challenges.
- Questions were designed to be clear, concise, and relevant to patient experiences with GLP-1 medications.

### Data Analysis

- Responses were quantified and summarized using percentages and frequency distributions.
- The main adherence barriers were identified and categorized for analysis.

### Ethical Considerations

- Patient confidentiality was maintained throughout the study.
- Participation was voluntary, and no personal identifiers were used in data reporting.

## RESULTS

### Survey Participation & Demographics

- Total Participants: 63 patients.
- Average Age: 47.5 years old.
- Diabetes Status:
  - 71% (45 patients) had Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM).
  - 29% (18 patients) did not have a T2DM diagnosis.

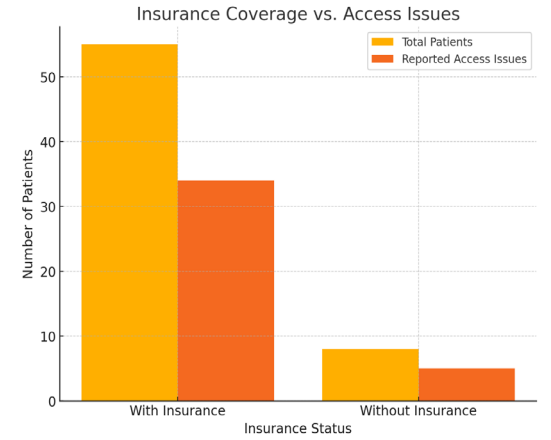
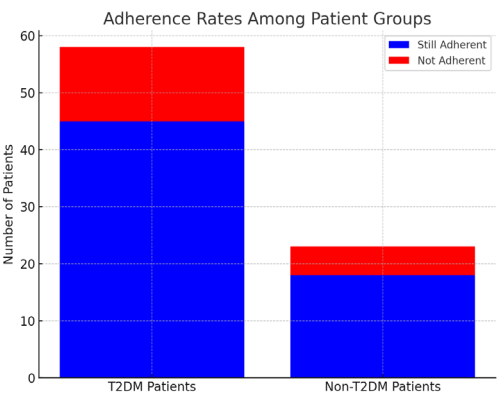
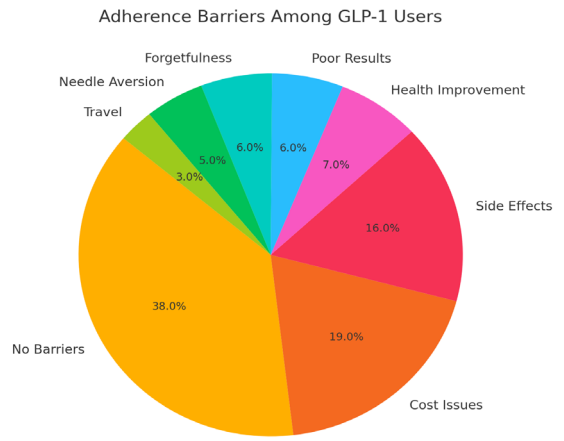
### Medication Access & Insurance Coverage

- 87% (55 patients) had insurance coverage for their GLP-1 receptor agonist.
- 13% (8 patients) were uninsured.
- 62% of respondents reported experiencing issues accessing their medication due to shortages or high costs.

### Adherence Rates & Discontinuation Factors

- 65% (41 patients) were still taking their prescribed medication at the time of the survey.
- 35% had discontinued use, citing multiple barriers.

### Barriers to Adherence (See Pie Chart)



## REFERENCES

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## KEY OBSERVATIONS

- Cost and side effects were the most commonly reported adherence barriers.
- Patients who received pharmacist outreach were more likely to request refills, indicating that direct patient engagement could improve adherence.
- Insurance did not guarantee accessibility—even insured patients struggled with high copays or coverage issues.
- Medication shortages significantly impacted adherence, with many patients unaware of supply chain disruptions before the study.

## LESSONS LEARNED

- Access and affordability remain major obstacles for patients.
- Pharmacist-led interventions, such as patient educations and outreach, can enhance adherence.
- Medication shortages significantly impact patient satisfaction and compliance.
- Patients appreciated proactive communication regarding their refills and availability.

## CONCLUSION

- GLP-1 Receptor Agonist adherence is influenced by multiple factors, including cost, side effects, and availability.
- Pharmacists play a vital role in mitigating adherence barriers through patient education and engagement.
- Future interventions should focus on structured outreach programs, collaboration with healthcare providers, and improving access to these essential medications.