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WELLNESS

In the News

Catch up on the latest **wellness-related developments** from the past month.

Stopping GLP-1s May Lead to Weight Regain in Less Than 2 Years

A growing number of studies show that glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) drugs, such as Ozempic, Wegovy, Mounjaro and Zepbound, can help people lose a significant amount of weight. However, new evidence suggests that most of that weight tends to return once the medication is stopped.

The BMJ, a peer-reviewed medical journal, published research analyzing 37 studies involving more than 9,000 adults and found that people regain weight at an average rate of 0.4 kilograms (about 1 pound) per month after stopping weight loss medication. This means many individuals return to their starting weight in 1.4 to 1.7 years. Metabolic health improvements, such as better blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar, also tend to reverse during this period. Importantly, the review showed that people regain weight faster after stopping medication than after ending behavioral programs, such as structured diet and exercise support.

These findings note that those who discontinue GLP-1 medications typically regain much of the lost weight and often return to baseline within about 1.7 years. Experts emphasize that these drugs work more like treatments for chronic conditions, similar to blood pressure medication, rather than short-term fixes. Stopping abruptly can accelerate weight regain, while gradually tapering off, paired with ongoing healthy eating, physical activity and long-term lifestyle support, may help slow the rebound.

Even with weight loss medication, lasting success requires consistent lifestyle habits. Small, sustainable changes, like swapping sugary snacks for fruit, adding more whole grains, drinking more water or building short movement breaks into the workday, can make a meaningful difference. These healthy choices support well-being, whether someone uses medication or not.

For personalized and sustainable weight loss strategies, be sure to consult your health care provider. They can help tailor a plan that fits your unique needs and circumstances.

Study Finds Wearable Trackers May Help Detect Depression Relapse

New research suggests that wearable technology, specifically wrist-worn devices like smartwatches, may soon play a pivotal role in predicting relapse in people with major depressive disorder (MDD). Recent studies indicate that subtle, passive measurements of sleep and daily activity patterns can serve as early warning signs, signaling heightened relapse risk weeks or even months before symptoms return.

In a study published in JAMA Psychiatry, researchers followed 93 adults with remitted MDD for up to two years. Participants wore a research-grade actigraphy

device continuously, generating more than 32,000 days of sleep and activity data. The study found that individuals with increasingly irregular sleep patterns had nearly double the risk of relapse. One of the strongest predictors was a weakening distinction between daytime activity and nighttime rest, indicating disruptions in circadian rhythm stability.

This early detection advantage is critical because relapses in depression are common, with about 60% of people experiencing another episode within five years of recovery. Traditionally, clinicians rely on patients to self-report symptoms, such as persistent sadness, loss of interest or changes in appetite, which often appear only after a depressive episode has already begun. Wearable devices, however, can reveal changes far earlier by continuously monitoring sleep disruptions, nighttime awakenings and irregular activity cycles.

The implications for mental health care are substantial. Researchers envision a future where a smartwatch might prompt users with alerts such as, "A new depressive episode may be approaching—consider contacting your health care provider." Because these devices operate passively and continuously provide data, they offer a powerful complement to traditional clinical assessments and could transform relapse-prevention strategies.

Overall, the growing evidence underscores how wearable technology could help individuals and clinicians intervene earlier, potentially reducing the severity and frequency of future depressive episodes. If you have concerns about your mental health or screening options, consider reaching out to your health care provider for personalized guidance.

Morning Coffee May Lower Dementia Risk

Growing evidence suggests that your morning cup of coffee may offer more than just a boost in alertness; it may also help reduce dementia risk. Recent large-scale studies have found that moderate consumption of caffeinated coffee or tea is associated with a lower likelihood of developing dementia and slower cognitive decline.

A major prospective study published in JAMA followed over 131,000 participants for up to 43 years, tracking dietary habits, cognitive assessments and dementia diagnoses. Researchers discovered that individuals who regularly drank two to three cups of caffeinated coffee per day or one to two cups of caffeinated tea had a 15%-20% lower risk of dementia compared to nondrinkers. These participants also experienced slower cognitive decline and performed better on objective cognitive tests.

The findings also highlight a key distinction: caffeinated coffee, not decaf, appears to provide the strongest protective effect. Higher caffeinated coffee intake was significantly associated with better cognitive outcomes and lower dementia risk, whereas decaffeinated coffee showed no meaningful association. This suggests that caffeine, along with bioactive compounds such as polyphenols, may help reduce inflammation, oxidative stress and vascular risk factors linked to cognitive decline.

Although researchers caution that these findings cannot prove causation, the evidence increasingly supports coffee and tea as beneficial components of a brain-healthy lifestyle. Morning coffee may not be a cure-all, but as part of a long-term pattern, it could help preserve cognitive function and reduce dementia risk.

Stay tuned for more wellness-related news and developments.