

## Weight loss drugs like Ozempic are changing how we think about health — but we still don't know how they work

Every so often a drug comes along that has the potential to change the world. Medical specialists say the latest to offer that possibility are the new drugs that treat obesity — Ozempic, Wegovy, Mounjaro and more that may soon be coming onto the market.

It's early, but nothing like these drugs has existed before.

"Game changers," said Jonathan Engel, a historian of medicine and health care policy at Baruch College in New York.

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While other drugs discovered in recent decades for diseases like cancer, heart disease and Alzheimer's were found through a logical process that led to clear targets for drug designers, the path that led to the obesity drugs was not like that. In fact, much about the drugs remains shrouded in mystery. Researchers discovered by accident that exposing the brain to a natural hormone at levels never seen in nature elicited weight loss. They really don't know why, or if the drugs may have any long-term side effects.

"Everyone would like to say there must be some logical explanation or order in this that would allow predictions about what will work," said Dr. David D'Alessio, chief of endocrinology at Duke, who consults for Eli Lilly among others. "So far there is not."

[\*\*This is an excerpt. Read the full article here\*\*](#)