Obesity drugs Ozempic and Wegovy are upending the health care system. Should we be concerned?

Novo Nordisk and Eli Lilly are about to start raking in tens of billions of dollars a year on their new obesity drugs, say Wall Street analysts. That's great news for the drugmakers, certainly, but it could be a disaster for the companies and government agencies set to pick up the bill.

The new medicines, known as GLP-1 receptor agonists, promise body weight reductions of as much as 20%, and may cut patients' risk of heart attack or stroke. By all appearances, they're the most effective safe weight-loss drugs in history.

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No surprise, then, that the demand for these medicines is huge and projected to get even larger as more supply comes on-line and more GLP-1s win Food and Drug Administration approval for weight loss.

But what has gotten less attention is the healthcare crisis that could come as spending on the drugs threatens to overwhelm the insurers, employers, and government programs that buy the country's medicines. The financial crunch would probably peak from 2025, when Medicare coverage of the medicines might begin, to 2027, when the cost of some of the drugs could start to drop.

This is an excerpt. Read the original post here (behind paywall)