

**Executive Highlights**

- **The 33<sup>rd</sup> European Congress on Obesity will take place in Istanbul, Turkey.** See the conference [website](#), [agenda](#), and our day-by-day preview below. We remember so many different ECO trips, and we imagine this will be one of the best ever in terms of new data as well as real world data! See our [Close Concerns Knowledgebase](#) for past coverage; any access problems, just write us [here](#). From the days where very successful obesity interventions yielded five percent weight loss, the future is here, and now it's all about obesity management medication (OMM) – while we've focused previously on anti-obesity medication (AOM), we heard more references last week at the Cleveland Clinic Obesity Summit to OMM and we like that *management* highlights long-term chronic approaches.
- **In addition to exciting new data, many sessions this year will focus on the efficacy, safety, and real-world use of GLP-1 RAs. Here are some of the highlights!**
  - Drs. Georgia Argyrakopoulou (Athens Medical Center, Greece) and Sean Wharton (Wharton Medical Clinic, Ontario, Canada) will share post-hoc analyses of the [STEP-UP](#) trial, evaluating the time to sustainable weight reduction and changes in eating behavior with high-dose Wegovy (semaglutide 7.2 mg).
  - On weight maintenance, Dr. Aronne, Dr. Benjamin Horne (Stanford University), and Prof. Carel Le Roux (University College Dublin, Ireland) will present results from [SURMOUNT-MAINTAIN](#) and [ATTAIN-MAINTAIN](#), examining tirzepatide and orforglipron, respectively, for long-term weight maintenance.
  - Dr. Timothy Garvey (University of Alabama), a major thought leader that we've just seen speak at the Cleveland Clinic Obesity Summit last week, will present a post-hoc analysis of the [REDEFINE 1](#) trial, evaluating the relationship between CagriSema doses and weight reduction – we look forward to hearing about the flexible titration scheme used in the trial.
  - The [ORION](#) study sponsored by Novo Nordisk will also indirectly compare oral semaglutide and Lilly's oral GLP-1 RA orforglipron using [OASIS-4](#) and [ATTAIN-1](#) data. On the “quality of weight loss”, Dr. Louis Aronne (Weill Cornell Medicine) will also present body composition changes during a 6-month withdrawal from semaglutide with or without bimagrumab in the [BELIEVE](#) extension study.
- **Several talks will discuss obesity management in specific populations.**
  - In the important population of older adults that is receiving more and more attention, Prof. Luca Busetto (University of Padova, Italy) will present a pooled analysis of the [STEP](#) trials reviewing the efficacy and safety of semaglutide in adults aged  $\geq 65$  years.
  - For the pediatric population, a session on Thursday will discuss pharmacotherapy in children and adolescents.
  - We especially look forward to real-world studies evaluating semaglutide in this population, as well as the [RESETTLE](#) trial results, which assessed semaglutide in severe, persistent childhood-onset obesity.
  - On a broader level, Dr. Elysa Ioannou (Sheffield Hallam University, UK) will underscore the importance of transitioning care from pediatric to adult services for obesity treatment.
- **On mechanisms**, Prof. Turgay Dalkara (Bilkent University, Türkiye) will deliver the Special Plenary Session on the neurobiological drivers of appetite and reward. We look forward to learning more about the

molecular mechanisms that drive appetite and weight gain, as well as how modern obesity medications, such as GLP-1, GIP, glucagon RA, and amylin agonists, mitigate these pathways.

- **Finally, on policy and food environment**, Dr. Simón Barquera (World Obesity Federation) will deliver an important plenary lecture on the global footprint of ultra-processed foods and future directions for research and policy.
- ECO 2026 will be hosted in Istanbul, Türkiye, from Tuesday, May 12, to Friday, May 15. See below for our preview and note that all times are in local time (TRT). See some of our most recent previous coverage in [2025](#) and [2024](#) – all our coverage of ECO since 2009 is in the Close Concerns Knowledgebase, including the first year we covered the conference, back in [2009](#) – we chose this day due to a talk by Ireland’s renowned [Professor Carel Le Roux](#), now of University College Dublin, then of Imperial College, London. While it is notable to see the progress the field has made, it is nothing short of devastating to see how many more people with obesity there are in the world today and to see how obesogenic so many environments are today. We look forward to learning much more about less obesogenic environments that propel better health for all populations.

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## Tuesday, May 12<sup>th</sup>

- **(12:30 – 2 pm): How to Adapt Lifestyle Intervention in Patients Using Incretin-based OMM.** In this afternoon session, Prof. Laurence Dobbie (King's College London, UK) and Dr. Liisa Tolvanen (Karolinska Institute, Sweden) will open with an overview of the [EASO, EFAD, and ECPO consensus statement](#) on nutritional, functional, and psychological considerations for incretin-based therapies in adults with obesity. Prof. Jonatan Ruiz (University of Granada, Spain) will then offer commentary on the metabolic synergy between physical activity and obesity therapy, while Dr. Laura Favley (Reset Health, UK) will share strategies for sustaining adherence to incretin-based therapy despite adverse events. Closing the session, Ms. Lucy Jones (Oviva, UK) will present outcomes from [Oviva's digital tier-3 weight management](#) program in the UK, which enrolled 1,270 participants. Note that while previously, the field used “AOM” for “anti-obesity medications” we are now seeing more of “obesity management medications” or OMM, a story on which we will be interested in getting the backstory!
- **(12:30 – 2 pm): The Nature Medicine Commission on Data-Driven Prevention and Management of Obesity.** In this afternoon session, Dr. Liam Messin (Nature Medicine, UK), Prof. Paul Franks (Queen Mary University of London, UK), and Dr. Sara Suliman (Imperial College London, UK) will discuss a commissioned piece on leveraging data to support obesity prevention and management. We are particularly interested in Dr. Messin’s views as he is Deputy Editor at Nature Medicine. We are also keen to hear Dr. Suliman speak on global engagement strategies for obesity decision support.
- **(2:15 – 3:45 pm): Pharmacotherapy 1.** What is sure to be a packed session features a stellar line-up of clinical trial results, including post-hoc analyses of the [STEP UP trial](#) and [REDEFINE 1](#), as well as results from the [BELIEVE extension study](#). New data will abound! Drs. Georgia Argyrakopoulou (Athens Medical Center, Greece) and Sean Wharton (Wharton Medical Clinic, Ontario, Canada) will discuss the time to sustainable weight reduction and changes in eating behaviors with semaglutide 7.2 mg from the [STEP UP](#) trial. We are really interested to hear more about this since the “step up” from 2.4 mg to 7.2 mg seems like a major one and we wonder about side effects that patients will be experiencing and how doctors will advise patients to address those in the best and easiest ways. We are also curious about the variability of side effects

that people with obesity will experience who “step up”. Prof. Luca Busetto (University of Padova, Italy) and Dr. Eric Ravussin (Pennington Biomedical Research Center) will then offer insights from the [REDEFINE 1](#) trial. Closing the session, the renowned Dr. Louis Aronne (Weill Cornell Medicine) will present findings from the [BELIEVE](#) extension study, evaluating how withdrawing from semaglutide and bimagrumab affects body composition over a six-month period.

## Wednesday, May 13<sup>th</sup>

- **(08:30 – 09:15): Machine Learning Approaches for Predicting Functional Consequences of Human Genetic Variants.** This morning plenary lecture in Hall 1 delves into the foundational role of technology in basic science. The session focuses on how machine learning is being deployed to decode complex genetic data, allowing researchers to predict how specific variants may influence metabolic outcomes and weight regulation at a molecular level.
- **(09:30 – 11:00): Obesity in Older Adults at Risk of Disability.** In this morning session located in Hall 6, the discussion focuses on the unique clinical challenges of managing obesity in the aging population. Experts will explore the intersection of weight management and physical function, specifically addressing how to mitigate disability risks while treating older patients. The session provides a critical look at tailoring interventions to maintain mobility and quality of life in this vulnerable demographic.
- **(11:30 – 1 pm): The Maintenance Imperative: Protecting Health Gains after Weight Loss with Incretin Therapies: Results from SURMOUNT-MAINTAIN and ATTAIN-MAINTAIN.** In a highly anticipated session, we’ll hear again from Weill’s Dr. Aronne, as well as Dr. Benjamin Horne (Stanford University), and Prof. Carel Le Roux (University College Dublin, Ireland) on results from [SURMOUNT-MAINTAIN](#) and [ATTAIN-MAINTAIN](#), which investigated tirzepatide and orforglipron, respectively, for maintenance of body weight reduction. We imagine the tirzepatide discontinuation will be associated with significant weight regain as well as worse cardiometabolic risk factors. Topline results of the [ATTAIN-MAINTAIN](#) study, announced in [December 2025](#), showed that switching to orforglipron from semaglutide or tirzepatide only led to 1-6% weight regain over 52 weeks.
- **(11:30 – 1:00): Digital Solutions to Obesity.** Located in Hall 6, this abstract session highlights the practical application of technology in obesity management and intervention. Presenters will showcase various digital tools—ranging from mobile health platforms to remote monitoring systems—that are currently being used to improve patient adherence and sustain long-term health gains.
- **(13:45 – 15:15): Expanding Frontiers in Cardiometabolic Care with Amylin-Based Therapies.** This afternoon session in Hall 1 introduces the highly anticipated results from the REDEFINE clinical trial program. The spotlight is on CagriSema—a fixed-dose combination of the amylin analog cagrilintide and semaglutide.
  - REDEFINE 1 & 4 Results: Headline data shows that CagriSema achieved an impressive 23.0% weight loss over 84 weeks. While it narrowly missed the non-inferiority primary endpoint against tirzepatide 15 mg (which reached 25.5%), the results confirm that the "dual-agonist" approach provides superior weight reduction compared to GLP-1 alone.
  - Cardiovascular Impact: Early findings from REDEFINE 3 are also discussed, suggesting that this combination significantly reduces predicted atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease (ASCVD) risk in adults with overweight or obesity.
- **(3:15 – 4 pm): Ultra-Processed Foods: The State of the Science and Future Directions for Research and Policy.** We’re eager to attend this plenary lecture, in which Dr. Simón Barquera (World Obesity Federation) will examine the modern global footprint of ultra-processed foods and chart future directions for research and policy. With the WHO reporting in [2022](#) t
- hat one in eight people worldwide were living with obesity – a figure that has more than doubled since 1990 – the role of ultra-processed foods in this epidemic warrents urgent attention. Their high energy density and palatability [promote](#) excessive caloric intake and can disrupt normal satiety signaling, making them a key driver of the ongoing obesity pandemic.

- **(4:30 – 6 pm): Reframing Diagnosis and Management of Obesity.** Rounding out the second day of the meeting, Prof. Luca Busetto will set the stage by making the case for a new definition and diagnostic framework for obesity. Dr. Andreea Ciudin (Hospital Vall d'Hebron, Spain) will follow with a discussion of the methods we might employ to get there, and Prof. Barbara McGowan (King's College London, UK) will introduce a proposed new treatment algorithm. Closing the session, Prof. Dror Dicker (Tel Aviv University, Israel) will address how these advancements might be translated into everyday clinical practice.

## Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup>

- **(11:30 – 1 pm): Pharmacotherapy in Child & Adolescent Management: Opportunities and Challenges.** In this session, led by Dr. Melania Manco (Bambino Gesù Children's Hospital, Italy) and Dr. Tryggvi Helgason (University Hospital in Reykjavik, Iceland), speakers will highlight the use of obesity therapies in pediatric populations. Dr. Sigrun Thorsteinsdottir (University of Iceland, Iceland) will first share the findings of a nationwide longitudinal study, evaluating the real-world use of semaglutide in children with obesity. Several studies have also evaluated the efficacy of obesity medications in young populations. Ms. Valeria Cimador (University of Bologna, Italy) will present a real-world study, which found that semaglutide conferred weight loss – albeit less than in randomized clinical trials – in adolescents with obesity. Dr. Joachim Holt (University of Copenhagen, Denmark) will deliver [RESETTLE](#) trial results, evaluating Novo Nordisk's semaglutide in severe persistent childhood-onset obesity. Finally, Dr. Elysa Ioannou (Sheffield Hallam University, UK) will then underscore the importance of transitioning care from pediatric to adult services for obesity treatment.
- **(11:30 – 1 pm): Hot Topics.** We look forward to this fascinating abstract session, whose topics span from the obesity phenotypes to the quality of weight loss. Two talks, in particular, will focus on diabetes, and multiple talks will hold high interest for us:
  - Dr. Abdulhameed Albarraq Alhazmi (Jazan University Hospital, Saudi Arabia) will discuss how food noise in adults with T1D is associated with BMI, GLP-1 RA use, and diabetes duration.
  - Meanwhile, Dr. Jose Raul Herance (University Autonomous de Barcelona, Spain) will present on new obesity phenotypes in people with T2D, as identified by CT-scan images and AI.
  - On the quality of weight loss, Dr. Anna Lucatello (Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Italy) will discuss the degree to which weight loss is associated with early and greater reduction of visceral adipose tissue, driving health benefits.
  - We are also interested in learning about the impact of metabolic surgery on muscle composition from Dr. Jennifer Linge (Linköping University, Sweden).
- **(11:30 – 1 pm): Treating to Target in Obesity Care: Evolving Approaches in Obesity Management.** Wow what a line up!
  - We are eager to attend this session on obesity treatment targets, led by Dublin's Prof. Le Roux and Dr. Julia Dunn (University of Colorado Anschutz).
  - We are also particularly keen to hear Novo Nordisk's Dr. David Ørsted (VP of Obesity and MASH in Global Medical Affairs) who will highlight the [Innovative Health Initiative-SOPHIA](#) project (Stratification of obesity phenotypes to optimize future therapy), which is a partnership between the public and private sectors to identify obesity subtypes and develop an algorithm to predict the risk of obesity and treatment response.
  - Profs. Luca Busetto (University of Padova, Italy) and Le Roux will propose treatment targets of obesity based on observational studies and clinical trials.
  - Finally, the great obesity researcher Dr. Donna Ryan (Pennington Biomedical emerita) will discuss her view on the future of obesity management – we expect every seat to be packed for this!
- **(3:30 – 4:15): The Growing Role of Artificial Intelligence in Obesity Management.** This afternoon plenary in Hall 1 explores the cutting edge of clinical care. The session examines how AI and algorithmic support are being integrated into daily treatment pathways to optimize outcomes. The discussion highlights the shift

toward AI-assisted precision medicine, where technology works alongside obesity management medications (OMM) to provide more personalized and effective patient care.

## Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup>

- **(8:30 – 9:15 am): Special Plenary Session: Neurobiological Drivers of Appetite and Reward.** In this morning session, Prof. Turgay Dalkara (Bilkent University, Türkiye) will deliver a special lecture on the neuroscience and biology underlying the appetite and reward circuit. We look forward to learning more about the molecular mechanisms that drive appetite and weight gain, as well as how modern obesity medications mitigate these pathways. Recently, in [May 2026](#), Prof. Dalkara published a letter to the *Annals of Medicine and Surgery*, commenting on the evolving roles of coronary pericytes in the brain-gut-heart signaling. We would be interested to hear Prof. Dalkara's insights into molecular mechanisms through which GLP-1 RAs confer weight loss, as well as the broader cardiometabolic benefits.
- **(9:30 – 11 am): Pharmacotherapy 2.** In this morning abstract session, led by Dr. Sara Suliman (Imperial College London, UAE) and Prof. Feray Akbaş (Soğliq Elmlari Üniversitesi, Türkiye), speakers will highlight clinical and lifestyle considerations of GLP-1 RAs.
  - We especially look forward to Dr. Timothy Garvey's (University of Alabama) post-hoc analysis of the [REDEFINE 1](#) trial, evaluating the relationship between CagriSema doses and weight reduction, which would be valuable, given that the trial used a flexible titration scheme.
  - Prof. Luca Busetto (University of Padova, Italy) will present a pooled analysis of the STEP trials reviewing the efficacy and safety of semaglutide in older adults aged  $\geq 65$  years.
  - Another study by Novo Nordisk will indirectly compare oral semaglutide and Lilly's oral GLP-1 RA orforglipron using [OASIS-4](#) and [ATTAIN-1](#) data.
- **(11:30 – 1 pm): CV Risk Stratification and Intervention in People Living with Obesity.** In this session, focused on cardiovascular risks in people with obesity, we are eager to listen to all these talks!
  - Dr. Konstantinos Koskinas (Bern University Hospital, Switzerland) on whether obesity should be considered when calculating cardiovascular risks.
  - Prof. Oliver Schnell (Sciarc GmbH, Germany) will then deliver an overview of old and new cardiovascular outcomes results, which will undoubtedly include the [SURPASS-CVOT](#) trial first presented at EASD 2025 by Dr. Ryan.
  - Finally, Prof. Barbara McGowan (Guy's and St. Thomas' Hospital, UK) will discuss how to use the EASO algorithm to personalize obesity care for patients in routine clinical practice.

-- Elizabeth Rose, Kat Moon, and Kelly Close