Semaglutide

➳ Semaglutide is a type of molecule our body makes, called a GLP-1 analog. This molecule increases insulin production and targets areas in the brain that regulate our appetite and food cravings.

➳ **Semaglutide works in the following ways:**
- Delays how quickly your stomach digests food, helping you to feel full/satisfied with smaller portions
- Slows intestinal motility, so you feel full longer after meals/snacks
- Lowers blood sugar
- Stimulates insulin released by the pancreas
- Helps to reduce inflammation throughout the body, which helps you to break down fat stores

➳ **Compounded Semaglutide:**
- The prescribed compounded semaglutide contains the additives vitamin B12 and glycine.
    - Vitamin B12 helps to reduce nausea side effect and can help improve energy
    - Glycine, an amino acid, helps to slow muscle loss often associated with weight loss
    - *This medication must be refrigerated.*

➳ **Treatment with Semaglutide:**
- *Before* being prescribed semaglutide, you will be required to have lab work completed. This will be ordered at the time you book your appointment, and must be completed at least 5 days prior to your appointment so all results are available.
- You must be seen on a monthly basis for evaluation of progress, any necessary lab work, vital signs (weight, blood pressure, etc), and to receive your pre-filled syringes of medication.
- The dose is adjusted on a monthly basis, as appropriate, until you reach a maintenance dose.

➳ **Side Effects/Contraindications:**
- The most common side effects include nausea and constipation, however, patients have also reported acid reflux (heartburn), stomach pain, vomiting, and diarrhea.
- The risk of serious side effects increases in patients with low blood sugar, kidney issues, and risk of allergic reactions.
- ****Female patients**: this medication can reduce the effectiveness of oral birth control, so please consider additional barrier protection (condoms), or switching to an alternative form of birth control, such as an IUD. **THIS MUST BE DISCONTINUED NO LESS THAN TWO (2) MONTHS PRIOR TO ANY PLANNED PREGNANCY.**
- Please inform all other healthcare providers you see that you are taking it, so you can be properly instructed (e.g. stopping it 1-2 weeks before anesthesia, etc.)

Semaglutide Injection Instructions

➳ **Before You Begin:**

- Wash your hands: Use soap and water to thoroughly clean your hands. This helps prevent any bacteria from entering the injection site.
- Gather supplies: Collect all necessary supplies including the prefilled syringe and alcohol swabs.
- Choose an injection site: Common sites include the abdomen (around the belly button), upper/outer thighs (reduces nausea/GI effects), or buttocks (reduces nausea/GI effects). Rotate injection sites to prevent irritation or lumps.

➳ **Step-by-Step Guide:**

- Prepare the injection site:
    - Clean the chosen injection site with an alcohol swab. Allow it to air dry completely. This helps reduce the risk of infection.
- Prepare the syringe:
    - Remove the needle cap from the syringe. Avoid touching the needle or allowing it to come into contact with any surface.
- Inject the medication:
    - Pinch the skin at the injection site to create a firm area for injection.
    - Insert the needle at a 45 to 90-degree angle, depending on the amount of subcutaneous tissue.
    - Push the plunger slowly and steadily to inject the medication.
    - Once the medication is injected, release the pinch on the skin, and remove the needle from your skin.
- Post-injection care:
    - Apply pressure to the injection site with a clean cotton ball or gauze pad if there is any bleeding.
    - If necessary, use a bandage to cover the injection site.
- Dispose of the syringe and needle:
    - If you have one available, place the used syringe/needle into a sharps disposal container immediately after use.
    - If you do not have a sharps container, keep your used syringes in a separate container and bring them with you to your next appointment for disposal.

➳ **Additional Tips:**

- If you're unsure about any step or have concerns, contact our office for assistance.
- Never reuse needles or share injection equipment.
- In case of severe allergic reactions or other emergencies, contact emergency services immediately.
- Please schedule your next visit at each visit, to avoid missed doses.
