

'Mounjaro brides' fuel drug boom

Hyderabad: Soon-to-be brides and grooms seeking shortcuts to shed pounds before the big day have become the latest consumer target for weight-loss drugs in India.

New Delhi-based wellness clinic Klarity Skin Clinic touts a "Mounjaro bride" package, while other clinics have woven weight-loss injections into "pre-wedding" transformation packages typically focused on skin treatments and hairstyle makeovers. In a social media video, Klarity offers "guided nutrition, Mounjaro and smart workouts" to prepare brides to walk down the aisle.

Eight doctors interviewed by Reuters said they have been fielding inquiries from brides, and some grooms, about taking weight-loss drugs before taking their vows. Many asked for Eli Lilly's Mounjaro, the first GLP-1 medication to enter India's market for both diabetes and weight loss. It has become more sought after than Novo Nordisk's rival Wegovy, the doctors said.

"Over the last few months, over 20 per cent of the queries we've received for obesity injections are from to-be brides, who also openly give us a timeline on how soon



A doctor speaks with a patient about Mounjaro at a Mumbai clinic. (Reuters)

they are getting married," said Rajat Goel, a bariatric surgeon at Hindivine Healthcare in New Delhi. He said he prescribed the drugs only if patients were medically eligible, not for cosmetic use.

Aditi, a 26-year-old finance worker from Mumbai, consulted a doctor in November for a weight-loss prescription after exercise and diet failed to get the desired results.

"When I see the result, I feel happy," Aditi said about losing 10 kilograms before her February wedding.

She is one of the half a dozen brides and one groom, who spoke to Reuters

about pre-wedding use of weight-loss drugs. They cited societal pressure to look a "certain way" at their wedding and most had discontinued the injections soon after.

Novo and Lilly launched their obesity drugs in India last year. The market is forecast to reach ₹8000 crore (\$851.79 million) by 2030. Mounjaro sales doubled in the months after launch, making it the highest-selling drug in the world's most populous nation.

Indian drugmakers began selling cheaper versions of Novo's medicine last month after the patent on semaglutide, its active ingredient, expired, widening access.

The drugs are intended for adults classified as obese, or for those considered overweight with a weight-related medical condition such as diabetes, hypertension or sleep apnea.

The lowest Mounjaro injection pen dose sells for ₹13,125 per month, while the highest dose costs ₹25,781. Novo, which this week cut prices of Ozempic and Wegovy for the second time, is selling the lowest Wegovy dose for ₹5,660 and the highest for ₹16,400 a month. Reuters