# Colonic Pseudo-Obstruction Caused by Semaglutide: A Case Report

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## BACKGROUND

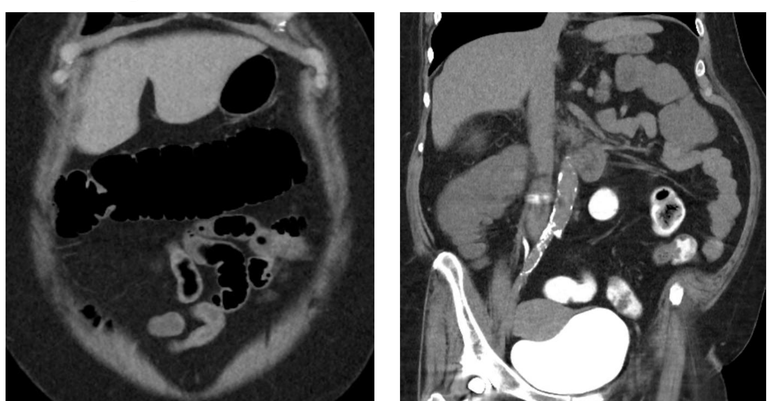
Semaglutide (Ozempic) is a glucagon-like-peptide-1 (GLP-1) receptor agonist used to treat type 2 diabetes. Recently, it has become more well known for its weight loss properties. Gastroparesis and constipation are documented adverse effects of Semaglutide. We present a 51 year old female who presented to the hospital with a history of increasing abdominal pain, nausea, distension and constipation.

## HOSPITAL COURSE

51 year old female with a history of diabetes, tubal ligation and hypertension who presented to the ED with generalized abdominal pain and constipation. She started using Semaglutide for weight loss 6 months ago. Symptoms started 4 months ago which were somewhat relieved with Miralax and enemas. Symptoms worsened over the past two weeks with increased abdominal pain, nausea and no bowel movements. Never had a colonoscopy. No family history of colon cancer.

## HOSPITAL COURSE

Physical exam revealed a distended abdomen and no peritoneal signs. There was a stool ball on rectal exam. Labs showed a leukocytosis of 16k and a lactic acid of 3. CT scan showed a distended colon with a transition in the descending colon.



She was admitted to the colorectal surgery service. Gastrografin enema was performed. Unfortunately, she did not tolerate it and the exam was ended early. The rectal contrast did not reach the transition area in the descending colon. She was taken for a colonoscopy. The scope easily passed through the hepatic flexure. No masses or lesions were identified. Afterwards, her diet was gradually advanced and she tolerated it well. She had return of bowel function and was discharged home.

## DISCUSSION

Semaglutide has been theorized to increase the risk of gastroporesis and constipation. We did not find any case reports of colonic pseudo-obstruction secondary to Semglutide use. Our case highlights another side effect to keep in mind when prescribing GLP-1 medications. It should also be a differential when patients present with colon-pseudo obstruction symptoms.

## References

Alfehaid, L., Alyami, M., Almohareb, S., Alshaya, O., & Almutairi, A. (2025). Evaluating bowel obstruction and ileus events in patients on GLP-1 receptor agonists: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Expert Opinion on Drug Safety*, 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1080/14740338.2025.2465870

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