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Protect Your Muscle on GLP-1s: Starter Guide



For anyone on a GLP-1 medication who wants to stay strong while their body changes. Gentle, simple, and made to print.

Why strength matters now

When you lose weight, you can lose some muscle along with fat. Muscle helps you climb stairs, carry groceries, keep your balance and feel steady. Regular strength training and enough protein are two everyday habits that help you hold on to it. Your healthcare provider can tell you what is right for you.

The national guideline

U.S. guidelines advise adults to do muscle-strengthening activities that work all major muscle groups on **2 or more days a week**, and say inactive people should "start low and go slow." (Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd ed. (U.S. HHS))

Protein basics

Protein is the building material for muscle. The Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) is **0.8 grams per kilogram of body weight (0.36 grams per pound)**. Harvard Health notes this is the basic minimum, not a target, and that some people may benefit from more to preserve muscle, spread across meals. (Harvard Health Publishing: How much protein do you need every day?)

On a GLP-1 your appetite may be small, so ask your provider or a dietitian for **your** number. Easy wins: put protein first on your plate, and spread it over meals and snacks.

Your gentle first week

Day	What to do
Mon	Strength: 5 moves, 1 round of 8 reps (see page 2)
Tue	Easy walk or rest
Wed	Strength: same 5 moves, 1 to 2 rounds
Thu	Rest, stretch, or a short walk
Fri	Strength: 1 to 2 rounds
Sat / Sun	Rest, and notice what felt good

Five starter moves (no equipment)

Move	How
Chair sit-to-stand	Sit tall near the edge of a sturdy chair, stand up, then sit back down slowly.
Wall push-up	Hands on a wall at shoulder height, bend your elbows toward the wall, then press away.
Glute bridge	Lie on your back, knees bent, and lift your hips until your body makes a straight line.
Standing calf raise	Hold a counter, rise onto your toes, then lower slowly.
Bird dog	On hands and knees, reach one arm and the opposite leg long, then switch sides.

Move slowly and with control. Breathe out on the effort. It is fine to hold a counter or chair for balance.

Questions to ask your provider

- Is strength training safe for me right now, and is there anything I should avoid?
- How much protein should I aim for each day, given my health and my medication?
- Should I see a registered dietitian to help plan meals when my appetite is low?
- What side effects should make me pause exercise and call you?
- How will we keep track of my muscle and strength, not just the number on the scale?
- Do I need to change anything on the days around my dose?

Notes from my appointment



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Short home workouts that plant flowers in your own garden.

Please read: This guide is general education, not medical advice. Lift Garden is not a medical provider. Talk to your healthcare provider before starting a new exercise or eating plan, especially while taking a GLP-1 medication, and stop any movement that causes pain, dizziness or shortness of breath. Sources: Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd ed. (U.S. HHS); Harvard Health Publishing: How much protein do you need every day?. More free guides at liftgarden.com/free