

WELLNESS

## In the News



### Catch up on the latest **wellness-related developments** from the past month.

#### **FDA Approves First GLP-1 Weight Loss Pill**

The first and only oral glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) pill approved for weight loss is now available to consumers by prescription. The once-a-day Wegovy tablet is now available by prescription and is also approved for reducing cardiovascular risk. It is provided by more than 7,000 U.S. pharmacies, including CVS and Costco, as well as several popular telehealth providers, such as Ro, LifeMD and Weight Watchers.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the oral Wegovy pill, which contains the active ingredient semaglutide, for the treatment of obesity and weight management on Dec. 22, 2025. While Rybelsus is another FDA-approved GLP-1 oral medication, it is only approved to reduce cardiovascular risk in adults with Type 2 diabetes. Rybelsus is sometimes prescribed off-label for weight loss.

This latest FDA approval marks a shift in obesity treatment. Weekly injections that can spur significant weight loss currently dominate the market. While the pill forms of GLP-1 drugs appear to be less potent, they are likely more convenient to take, which could substantially broaden the use of GLP-1s for weight loss. Wall Street analysts predict that GLP-1 drugs, both injectable and oral, will generate annual sales exceeding \$100 billion by 2030. Analysts and industry executives also do not expect oral GLP-1s to completely replace injections, but

they say pills could capture 20% of the global obesity drug market by 2030.

Currently, 1 in 8 Americans use a GLP-1 medication for weight loss, according to KFF, an independent source for health policy research. The new Wegovy pill likely represents an incoming era of even more widespread access to GLP-1 weight loss drugs. Furthermore, Novo Nordisk's weight loss pill could soon be joined by Eli Lilly's experimental GLP-1 pill (orforglipron), which succeeded in late-stage testing in 2025.

If you're curious about GLP-1 medications and whether they might be right for you, talk to your health care provider. They can help you understand how these drugs work, discuss potential benefits and risks, and determine if they align with your personal health goals.

#### **Trump Signs Executive Order to Reclassify Marijuana for Medical Use**

On Dec. 18, 2025, President Donald Trump signed an executive order to reclassify marijuana under federal law. The EO calls for marijuana to be rescheduled from Schedule I to Schedule III of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA). Schedule III drugs are considered less dangerous and are much less strictly controlled than Schedule I drugs.

Historically, marijuana has been controlled under

Schedule I of the CSA. In general, drugs, substances and certain chemicals used to make drugs are classified under five distinct schedules depending on the drug's acceptable medical use or dependency potential. Schedule I drugs are defined as drugs with no currently accepted medical use and a high potential for abuse.

The new order moves marijuana to Schedule III, a category for substances that have recognized medical benefits and are considered less risky. This change is intended to recognize marijuana's medical uses and increase research opportunities, not to fully legalize marijuana for recreational use.

Schedule III drugs, such as certain pain medications, are still controlled substances, but they're subject to fewer restrictions than Schedule I drugs. They are recognized as having medical uses and a lower potential for abuse. This shift reflects a growing movement that marijuana and its compounds, like CBD and THC, can provide medical benefits for conditions such as chronic pain and epilepsy.

The executive order follows recommendations from the Department of Health and Human Services, which concluded that marijuana has accepted medical uses. It also calls for more research into marijuana and hemp-derived products to better understand their benefits and risks. Additionally, the order directs federal agencies to update rules and work with Congress to ensure Americans have access to safe, full-spectrum CBD products while limiting products that could pose health risks.

This move could make it easier for researchers to study marijuana and for patients to access medical marijuana legally. It may also impact how marijuana-related products are regulated and sold in the future. However, marijuana will still be a controlled substance, so federal and state laws will continue to apply. If you're interested in learning more, talk to your health care provider.

## CDC Says Flu Hospitalizations Rising Dramatically

Hospitals across the United States are seeing a sharp rise in flu-related admissions as influenza activity surges this winter. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that flu activity is widespread, with 48 out of 52 jurisdictions experiencing high or very high levels of illness. Outpatient visits for flu-like symptoms have also reached record highs, surpassing all previous years since tracking began in 1997. So far this season, the CDC estimates there have been 11 million flu illnesses, 120,000 hospitalizations and at least 5,000 deaths, including several pediatric fatalities. This spike is straining emergency rooms and inpatient units nationwide, and health officials warn that the season is far from over.

The primary culprit is Influenza A (H3N2), a strain known for causing more severe illness, especially among vulnerable populations. Children under age 5 and adults over 65 face the highest risk of complications, which can include pneumonia and other serious conditions. Common symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches and fatigue. In some cases, nausea or diarrhea may occur, particularly in children.

Flu activity is expected to continue for several weeks, according to the CDC. The agency will continue to monitor flu activity. Visit the CDC website for more information on the flu and to learn about current alerts and advisories. Contact your health care provider to discuss treatments or talk about your personal risk factors and vaccination options, especially if you are older, have chronic health conditions or care for young children.

Stay tuned for more wellness-related news and developments.