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Ozempic access in the UAE: the EDE named-patient pathway

How UAE patients with type 2 diabetes obtain Ozempic (semaglutide) through the Emirates Drug Establishment unregistered-medicine import permit. On-label use only.

Last reviewed 2026-05-12 by Reserve Meds clinical and regulatory team.

Quick orientation, before anything else

Ozempic is the Novo Nordisk brand name for semaglutide injection, a once-weekly GLP-1 receptor agonist approved by the US FDA for three indications: glycemic control in adults with type 2 diabetes (December 2017), reduction of major adverse cardiovascular events in adults with type 2 diabetes and established cardiovascular disease (January 2020), and reduction of the risk of worsening kidney disease, kidney failure, and cardiovascular death in adults with type 2 diabetes and chronic kidney disease (January 28, 2025). Reserve Meds coordinates Ozempic strictly within those three on-label indications. Patients seeking semaglutide for weight management are out of scope; the FDA-approved obesity brand of semaglutide is Wegovy, a separate product handled on its own dedicated page. In the UAE, Ozempic is registered with MOHAP and is broadly stocked, but post-shortage allocation discipline and continuing patient demand mean that on-shelf availability of specific pen presentations is uneven. The named-patient pathway through the Emirates Drug Establishment is the route for continuity-of-care cases when local stock cannot meet the timeline a clinician requires.

Reserved for you.

Why patients in the UAE reach for Ozempic through NPP

The UAE operates one of the most developed pharmaceutical regulatory environments in the Gulf Cooperation Council. Even with that maturity, three structural access gaps appear repeatedly: a drug is on the federal register but not stocked at a particular pharmacy, a drug is registered for one indication but prescribed for another FDA-approved use that is not on the local label, or a drug is not registered in the UAE at all. Ozempic falls into the first category. The drug is registered with MOHAP, but the three-year US FDA shortage (early 2022 through February 21, 2025) produced global allocation pressure that has persisted into 2026 even after US resolution.

On-shelf availability in UAE pharmacies has been rationed at points across the titration ladder. Patients with an established type 2 diabetes diagnosis and a stable Ozempic dose can lose continuity when a pharmacy runs out of the specific pen presentation they need (0.25 mg or 0.5 mg starter pen, 1 mg maintenance pen, or 2 mg pen). The 1 mg dose is the specific dose studied in the FLOW trial for kidney and cardiovascular outcomes in patients with type 2 diabetes and chronic kidney disease, so for the CKD-progression cohort, dose-specific continuity matters clinically. The named-patient route lets a UAE-licensed physician import a specific quantity of a specific pen presentation for a named patient when local stock cannot meet the documented need.

The EDE named-patient pathway for Ozempic

The federal pathway for a UAE-licensed physician to obtain a medicine that is not consistently stocked locally is the unregistered-medicine import permit, historically administered by MOHAP and, from 29 December 2025, administered through the EDE portal at ede.gov.ae under Federal Decree-Law No. 38 of 2024. The framework allows hospitals and licensed pharmaceutical establishments to import a specific medicine for a specific patient when the medicine is approved by a recognised reference authority (the US FDA in this case) and a clinically equivalent locally registered alternative is not suitable or not available on the required timeline.

For Ozempic the clinical-justification angle is indication-specific. A complete application typically includes:

- A clinical justification letter from the treating physician (endocrinologist, diabetologist, primary care physician with diabetes credentials, cardiologist for the CV-risk cohort, or nephrologist for the CKD cohort) naming the on-label indication: type 2 diabetes, type 2 diabetes with established cardiovascular disease, or type 2 diabetes with chronic kidney disease
- The patient's prior diabetes treatment history (metformin, other oral agents, prior GLP-1 RA exposure), most recent HbA1c, and where applicable the relevant cardiovascular or renal documentation
- The treating physician's UAE medical license (MOHAP, DHA, DOH, or Sharjah Health Authority)
- An anonymised patient identifier where the EDE submission allows
- Product details: Ozempic, semaglutide, manufacturer Novo Nordisk, the specific pen presentation requested (0.25/0.5 mg starter, 1 mg maintenance, or 2 mg), the number of pens, and the intended treatment duration
- The destination dispensing facility license number and pharmacy in charge
- A cold-chain plan from the US authorised distributor through the importer to the dispensing pharmacy

Approval timelines for routine Ozempic cases are typically 5 to 15 business days, well within the routine band of the EDE framework. Reserve Meds will not process inquiries that include weight management language or that lack a documented type 2 diabetes diagnosis. Those inquiries are redirected internally or declined.

Where Ozempic gets dispensed in the UAE

Ozempic is a refrigerated injectable. The dispensing facility must hold a UAE pharmaceutical establishment license and maintain a 2 to 8 degrees Celsius cold chain. The UAE institutions that handle named-patient imports as established workflow and that have on-site cold-chain infrastructure include Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi (M42 group), Sheikh Khalifa Medical City in Abu Dhabi (SEHA network), Tawam Hospital in Al Ain, American Hospital Dubai (Mayo Clinic Care Network), King's College Hospital London Dubai, Mediclinic City Hospital in Dubai Healthcare City, and the larger NMC Healthcare sites. King's College Hospital London Dubai's endocrinology service and the endocrinology and cardiology services at Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi and American Hospital Dubai are common homes for the Ozempic patient cohort.

Smaller private clinics without import infrastructure route the case through a Dubai- or Abu Dhabi-based specialty importer who holds the establishment license, files the EDE permit, performs customs clearance under cold chain, and delivers the medicine to the prescribing physician's outpatient pharmacy. Patients in the Northern Emirates typically route to a Dubai or Abu Dhabi center where the treating physician holds joint privileges.

Real cost picture for Ozempic in the UAE

US wholesale acquisition cost for Ozempic as of 2025 is approximately USD 997 per 30-day pen across all three pen presentations, equating to roughly USD 12,000 per year before any rebates. Novo Nordisk has announced a WAC reduction effective January 1, 2027, that would bring list price to approximately USD 675 per pen. The UAE dirham is pegged to the US dollar at approximately 3.67 AED to 1 USD, so a 30-day pen at US WAC translates to roughly AED 3,660 today. Cash-pay pricing in UAE retail pharmacies for stocked product has at times tracked at or above US WAC; the named-patient acquisition cost is finalised only at firm-quote issuance after document review.

International cold-chain logistics for Ozempic typically runs USD 500 to USD 1,200 (approximately AED 1,800 to AED 4,400), reflecting validated 2 to 8 degrees Celsius packaging with phase-change materials, temperature monitoring, and customs clearance under permit. UAE customs and EDE fees are nominal relative to the drug cost. Reserve Meds' coordination fee is itemised separately. On insurance: Daman, Thiqa, GIG Gulf, Sukoon, ADNIC, and Orient each assess named-patient imports case by case. Several reimburse partially when Ozempic is on the patient's formulary. We supply the documentation needed; the claim itself remains with you or your hospital.

Typical timeline for Ozempic in the UAE

For an established type 2 diabetes patient with a clean clinical-justification letter and a documented prior Ozempic prescription, the typical end-to-end cycle is 2 to 5 weeks. The EDE permit step generally runs 5 to 15 business days. US-side sourcing through authorised distributors adds 3 to 7 days. International cold-chain transit and UAE customs clearance under the import permit are typically 3 to 7 days, well inside the unopened-pen stability envelope. Cold-chain biologic shipments add 2 to 3 days versus an ambient-controlled product like Trikafta. Timelines are presented as typical ranges, not promises.

What your physician needs to provide

The clinical justification letter is the heart of the package. For Ozempic the letter typically includes:

- The patient's confirmed type 2 diabetes diagnosis (ICD code or equivalent), most recent HbA1c, and prior diabetes treatment history
- The specific on-label indication being treated: glycemic control alone, glycemic control plus cardiovascular risk reduction in established CVD, or glycemic control plus reduction of kidney disease progression in chronic kidney disease
- The current Ozempic dose and pen presentation (0.25 mg or 0.5 mg starter pen for the first four titration weeks, 1 mg maintenance, or 2 mg maximum)

- The dosing plan: subcutaneous injection once weekly, on the same day each week, with or without food, with the labeled titration schedule (0.25 mg for 4 weeks, then 0.5 mg for at least 4 weeks, with optional escalation to 1 mg and a maximum of 2 mg)
- The monitoring plan: thyroid C-cell tumor symptoms (neck mass, dysphagia, hoarseness), acute pancreatitis, acute gallbladder disease, acute kidney injury particularly with significant gastrointestinal adverse reactions and volume depletion, diabetic retinopathy progression in patients with prior retinopathy, hypoglycemia when used with insulin or insulin secretagogues
- Screening confirmation that the patient does not have a personal or family history of medullary thyroid carcinoma or Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia syndrome type 2 (these are contraindications per the boxed warning)

The treating physician's UAE license must match the emirate of the dispensing facility. The Ozempic boxed warning for thyroid C-cell tumors based on rodent carcinogenicity studies should be acknowledged in the letter and on the patient's record.

Common questions about Ozempic in the UAE

Will my UAE insurance cover Ozempic through a named-patient route? Each insurer (Daman, Thiqa, GIG Gulf, Sukoon, ADNIC, Orient) assesses named-patient imports case by case. Several reimburse partially when Ozempic is on the patient's formulary even if not stocked. We supply the documentation; we do not promise coverage.

Can I get Ozempic for weight loss? No. Reserve Meds coordinates Ozempic strictly within the three FDA-approved on-label indications: type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular risk reduction in type 2 diabetes with established CVD, and reduction of CKD progression in type 2 diabetes with CKD. The FDA-approved obesity brand of semaglutide is Wegovy; that is a separate product, separately handled, and the page for Wegovy in the UAE is the right starting point if obesity is the indication.

What is the safety profile? Ozempic carries a boxed warning for risk of thyroid C-cell tumors based on rodent carcinogenicity studies; human relevance has not been determined. It is contraindicated in patients with a personal or family history of medullary thyroid carcinoma or Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia syndrome type 2. Most common adverse reactions are gastrointestinal: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, constipation. Acute pancreatitis, acute gallbladder disease, acute kidney injury with severe GI losses, and diabetic retinopathy progression in patients with prior retinopathy are labeled concerns.

Why Ozempic and not another GLP-1? Other GLP-1 RAs include dulaglutide (Trulicity, Lilly), liraglutide (Victoza, Novo Nordisk), and the dual GIP/GLP-1 agonist tirzepatide (Mounjaro, Lilly). As of 2026 Ozempic is the only GLP-1 RA with FDA-approved indications spanning glycemic control, cardiovascular risk reduction in T2D with CVD, and kidney outcomes in T2D with CKD. For a patient who falls into all three populations, label-aligned single-agent coverage is unique to Ozempic. Choice among agents is a clinical decision, not a Reserve Meds determination.

Is dose titration mandatory? The FDA-labeled titration is to start at 0.25 mg once weekly for 4 weeks, then increase to 0.5 mg for at least 4 weeks before considering escalation to 1 mg or eventually 2 mg. The 0.25 mg starting dose is for tolerability and is not effective for glycemic control on its own.

What is the typical course duration? Indefinite. Ozempic is chronic therapy for chronic conditions. Discontinuation typically reverses the glycemic, weight, cardiovascular, and renal benefits over time.

Where Reserve Meds fits in Ozempic cases

Reserve Meds is a US-based concierge coordinator. We do not replace your physician, do not replace the EDE, and do not replace the dispensing pharmacy. For Ozempic specifically we orchestrate US-side sourcing through authorised Novo Nordisk distributors (Cencora, McKesson, Cardinal Health), the regulatory documentation kit your physician needs (on-label indication template, dosing reference, monitoring plan summary including the thyroid C-cell warning), validated 2 to 8 degrees Celsius cold-chain logistics under chain-of-custody, and a single named coordinator through the case. Every firm quote specifies the pen presentation (0.25 mg / 0.5 mg starter, 1 mg, or 2 mg) because allocation and price differ by SKU. Reserve Meds will decline intake on any inquiry that includes weight-management language or that lacks a documented type 2 diabetes diagnosis.

Next step

If your physician has decided continuity on Ozempic matters and local stock cannot meet the timeline, the EDE named-patient pathway is the route. Join the waitlist below and we will confirm eligibility within 24 to 48 hours and route the documentation kit to your physician.

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Review & oversight. Content on this page is reviewed by Reserve Meds's clinical and regulatory team. A US-licensed pharmacist reviews every prescription before dispensing. Regulatory posture is informational, not legal advice; case-specific questions route to retained outside counsel. [Review methodology >](#)
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