

Local

Using Ozempic for weight loss is unhealthy: Doctor

KDA head warns against using diabetes drug by obese people

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: There has recently been a surging demand for Ozempic—which helps people with diabetes keep blood sugar levels in check—leading to a shortage. The popularity of the drug is not because of rising rate of diabetes, doctors say, but because of its weight loss benefits.

Speaking to Kuwait Times, Dr Waleed Al-Dahi, consultant endocrinologist and head of the Kuwaiti Diabetes Association, said that using diabetes injection medication is now a trend in Kuwait for obese people. "Everyone is looking for a solution

to lose weight quickly without the supervision of specialists, although using diabetes medications without a prescription is against the law, as these injections are not used in all cases," he said.

He indicated that these medications are being sold illegally on social media platforms and inside clinics without supervision, noting that some clinics are selling the injections at 3-4 times their real price. The cost of an injection is KD 36, said Al-Dahi, but it is sold at the clinic for KD 100. "We do not know whether a single needle is used for more than one patient or not, and this will pose a danger to the patient. This phenomenon is unhealthy and alarming. The only correct way to lose weight is to adopt healthy eating habits."

Al-Dahi stressed that diabetes injection medications are considered safe, but they must be taken at specific doses. Therefore, the patient needs to be under the supervision of a specialist doctor. Patients who don't have diabetes could get side effects as a result of the injections. Al-Dahi pointed out digestive problems is one dangerous symptom. These injections could also put people who suffer from kidney and thyroid problems at risk. "People who use those injections must check the family health history of cancer. The injections may also lead to an inflammation in the pancreas. Those who use the needles for weight loss will gain back more weight once they stop taking them," he said.

Ozempic is an FDA-approved prescription medication for the treatment of type 2 diabetes in adults. It helps improve blood sugar levels in diabetes patients and is proven to lower hemoglobin A1C, a measure for blood glucose over time, according to research cited on Ozempic's site. It is currently under review by the FDA as a once-a-week shot to help people lose weight when used in combination with diet and exercise.



Dr Waleed Al-Dahi

Contractors union: New law may directly affect economy

KUWAIT: The contractors union said that the bill suggesting the establishment of companies responsible for the creation and economic development of cities or residential areas may be disadvantageous for local and international contracting and construction companies.

The bill was introduced by the National Assembly in an attempt to address housing issues in the country. The union said the bill could restrict contractors' activities because it gives The Public Authority for Housing Welfare the right to veto any decision made by the contractor running a construction project. The bill also doesn't specify a mechanism for forming the administrative council, the number of its members or the mechanism for investor representation which could take away from the announced goal of the bill, which is to give the private sector a more active role in development.

"We believe that we are facing a pivotal stage to solve the housing crisis, which must be matched by sustainable solutions to the issue, and serious work to meet the multiplying housing demands, which will undoubtedly increase in the coming years, provided that these solutions are integrated solutions and stem from comprehensive and radical reforms," the union said in a press statement. The union indicated that the main problem in Kuwait does not lie in the lack of laws, but rather in their shortcomings and the way they are implemented.

"We find it necessary to emphasize a set of matters that must be taken into account in the event of the approval of this law, and perhaps the most important of them is to address the issue of financing projects done in partnership between the public and private sectors, and that the lack of a clear mechanism for providing cash liquidity to the contracted private company. These issues will negatively affect the quality of the project and will discourage local and international companies from participating. If they are not addressed, the bill will fail just as previous bill have failed when companies couldn't acquire the funding needed for completing projects," the statement added.

The union emphasized the need for allowing contracted companies to conduct their own feasibility studies, rather than leave that in the hands of the Public Authority for Housing Affairs.

Another issue raised by the union is that according to the bill, the time frame and residential density for each project will be pre-allocated by the authority. "We believe that it is necessary to give the contracted company the time and technical flexibility in order for projects to be attractive to foreign investors," the union said.

The union indicated that one of the most important objectives of this law is to transfer administrative and financial burdens from the public sector to the private sector.



Three with huge quantity of drugs arrested

KUWAIT: The anti-drug administration has nabbed a gang of three people in different areas with possession of five kilograms of hashish, 15,000 Lyrica pills, a kilo of chemical marijuana and 100 grams of methamphetamine. It also seized some money from them.

The operation is part of the continuous national campaign against drug-menace as directed by Interior Minister Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled who wanted to intensify inspection campaigns on drug smugglers and drug users. The suspects admitted their crime and said they intended to sell the illegal items. They were sent to the concerned departments to take legal procedures against them. The administration reiterated that campaigns will continue in combating drug-smugglers and traders of illegal substances and will not stop its campaigns until the menace is completely stamped out.

Kuwait's social policies to focus on women, children

KUWAIT: Kuwait's social policy will give priority to the empowerment of women, supporting early-childhood and developing the education and health sectors, said Dr Khaled Mahdi, general secretary of the Higher Council for Planning and Development on Thursday.

The lecture, titled "International Experiences in Building Social Policies to Enhance Economic Growth" was organized by the Kuwait Center for Public Policies. It explored modern mechanisms for creating social policies which achieve social welfare and how to sustain it, with a focus on inclusion and empowerment. The lecture also discussed the concepts of equality, justice and equal opportunities, as well as how to protect low-income groups, using Canada and Denmark as examples.

"Kuwait's social policies are always mentioned in development plans as they are related to education, social security, early childhood development, health care, women's empowerment and economic integration," he explained. "The general focus is on concepts related to early childhood and women's empowerment, because it is considered the main entry point for any long-term social change through," said Mahdi. The Kuwait Center for Public Policies since its founding in 2017 has established itself as a main source for crafting national public policies for Kuwait based on research and studies, added Mahdi. The center hosts a group of the best international lecturers to talk about successful international experiences, giving Kuwait the opportunity to formulate its local policy internally.

"There is confusion between social policies such as health, education, work and education, which are considered social sectoral policies, and integrated social policies, which are public and are concerned with empowering and providing security to all segments of society," said United Nations expert, Francois Farah, who was present at the lecture.

"Social policies also aim at ensuring equal access to basic services and opportunities. These policies also



Dr Khaled Mahdi (left) and Francois Farah

assume the establishment of controls in society that prevent exploitation at the expense of the group," Farah added that Arab countries need to focus on caring for youth when developing integrated social policies. He said that the policies associated with them are long-term meaning that it could take a long time to reap their benefits.

MoCI halts visitors for 262 services available on Sahel

KUWAIT: Minister of Commerce and Industry Mazen Al-Nahedh announced on Thursday the suspension of receiving auditors for 262 government services available on the unified government mobile application for electronic services, Sahel, by government agencies participating in the application.

"The suspension came based on the success of the application in being the basic building block in achieving

the goals of digital transformation in accordance with the national development plan - Kuwait Vision 2035, as the number of application users exceeded one million who completed 8,609,927 services, received 29,285,335 notifications and 17,615,700 statements," Al-Nahedh said.

"The number of entities participating in the application is 28, providing 277 services, leaving approximately 400 e-services with the entities participating in the application, which have not been converted into Sahel application," he added.

"This step comes as a continuation of reaping the fruits of success and in support of the launch of this application in completing transactions without reviewing government agencies as this will have a significant impact in directing different segments of society to electronically

completing transactions," he clarified. "Completion of government transactions electronically reduces pressure on government agencies and prevents waste of labor energies in completing transactions manually, in addition to the side benefits that will be achieved such as reducing traffic congestion and directing the work energies of government agencies to other works for optimal benefit," he concluded. —KUNA



Mazen Al-Nahedh

Medical conferences will raise level of service: Official

KUWAIT: The remarkable development that Kuwait is witnessing in all fields, specifically in the health sector, is the result of constant efforts to provide the best service and healthcare, including holding specialized medical conferences as well as attracting expertise from all over the world, said Dr Meshal Al-Kanderi, assistant undersecretary for dental affairs at the Health Ministry. The remarks came during his opening speech at the first "Orthopedic Surgery" conference held on Thursday.

"Specialization is of paramount importance in raising the level of health service, especially with regard to orthopedic surgery due to its therapeutic importance and the need to provide it at the required speed," Dr Al-Kanderi said. The conference will discuss the rapid development around the world in the field of orthopedic surgery, finding opportunities for joint cooperation between various agencies, utilizing available human and financial resources efficiently, and improving the level of service provided in this important field, "which will lead patients and auditors to feel the high level, quality and development of health services," he clarified.

The conference will last for three days and will witness the review of 47 scientific lectures, three training



Dr Meshal Al-Kanderi talks to participants during the conference.

surgical workshops, and live streamed surgical operations accompanied by discussions. "The rapid progress in various medical sciences requires organizing more conferences and scientific workshops. Such events reflect positively on the level of medical services, especially surgical specialties related to improving the quality of life for humans, such as orthopedic surgery in its various specialties," said Dr Owayed Al-Mutairi, president of the

Orthopedic Surgery Association in Kuwait.

The conference will include three panel discussions with participation from orthopedic graduate students. Participants will receive at least 20 approved medical training hours at the end of the conference. Al-Mutairi said the number of registered in the conference exceeded 300 participants from various medical specialties and scientific levels.



Higher education heads eye shared plan for GCC

KUWAIT: The Committee of Presidents and Directors of Universities and Higher Education Institutions in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries concluded the work of its twenty-fifth meeting on Thursday. Kuwait University was represented by the Acting Director of Kuwait University Prof Dr Suad Muhammad Al-Fadhli

and the Acting Vice President for Planning, Dr Huda Mahmoud Abdullah in the meeting.

The final program included holding a meeting for directors and presidents of universities, consisting of a presentation of the guide for e-learning. It also witnessed the inauguration of the GCC database "Jisr".

During the meeting, the committee followed up on the implementation of the decisions of the 24th meeting and concluded with a number of recommendations. It also decided to implement a number of initiatives adopted by KU. The committee will form a team made up of Kuwait University, Jeddah University, Gulf University for Science and Technology, and Taif University to present a unified academic program related to future technologies.

Kuwait University was also assigned to develop programs of cooperation and academic student research partnerships between the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council and other groups. It will develop a shared plan with GCC countries and other groups to determine a unified approach.

The committee recommended that Kuwait University will be preparing a unified guidance program designated for integrated education by college professors to be presented for the electronic learning committee in universities and higher education council in GCC countries. The committee will give their observations before submitting them to the higher education and scientific ministers' committee in the GCC.

