

## Is Ozempic a wonder drug?

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Ozempic, Wegovy and Mounjaro are claimed to be wonder drugs that will solve the problems of modern living, like obesity, diabetes and dementia. But there are better ways to do that, like going for a walk and stopping eating ultra-processed food. So are they really just mechanisms to perpetuate the profits of Big Pharma, at cost to us all?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kKCAegv3F4w&si=RM-MYI9SQuLfXd3V>

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This is the transcript

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I don't believe in Ozempic, I don't believe in Wegovy, and I don't believe in Mounjaro.

What on earth am I talking about? These three are the so-called wonder drugs that the Economist is talking about. They are singing their praises because they believe that these three drugs will solve the problems of diabetes, of obesity, and potentially of dementia, which some doctors are now calling diabetes type 3.

I don't believe that they're right.

I don't believe that these are wonder drugs.

I don't believe they are what the world needs now.

I do believe that they are another mechanism for Big Pharma to capture the income streams of the world's governments that are supposedly dedicated towards healthcare, but which are actually being used to maintain the unhealthy lifestyles of a world that has lost touch with food reality.

Forty years ago, we did not have crises of obesity and diabetes or of dementia on the scale that we have it now. We obviously had all three conditions, I'm not pretending that they have been created over that period, but their growth has been extraordinary. And to suggest that there has been some mutation in the human genome that has created this outcome over such an extraordinarily short period of time would be absurd, because clearly that has not happened.

Of course, the genome does develop, and change, and so do drugs, and so do diseases. But, in this case, I got the order of drugs and diseases right. Because, what I mean is, that we have taken a great many drugs over that 40 years, and they have caused us untold harm. The drug in question is ultra-processed food.

Ultra-processed food is fundamentally not a food. I know that because a food should satisfy our craving to be fed. But ultra-processed food doesn't do that. It is chemically engineered to make sure that very soon after we've eaten a dose of it, we want another dose of it.

And then another dose of it.

And then some more.

In fact, there is a report that I read recently that suggested that the average American has eleven feeding events a day. That's only a bit over an hour between the occasions when they want something to eat. Why? Because they are chemically induced to want more and more by the ultra-processed food that they eat.

And that as a consequence is of course fueling the crises that we have. Obesity is caused by overeating. Let's not beat around the bush. It doesn't need a drug to solve it, it needs a mechanism to break the addiction to that overeating.

And the same is true with regard to diabetes, which is a consequence of that obesity.

And let's be clear, that would also eventually be true of dementia if that is caused by the same problem.

So, what do we really do? Do we produce these drugs in vast quantities at enormous expense and get people hooked on them for life because they don't work unless they

are basically used for life with massive side effects and consequences for those who take them, including a loss of muscle mass, which will make life in old age much harder for many people because longevity is dependent upon the retention of muscle mass? Or do we go back and say we've got the whole of this wrong?

Now, I ask that not as a medical practitioner, because I'm clearly not, although, I was advised on this video by a medical practitioner, who I happen to be married to. But, the point about this is that there is a fundamental economic argument here.

What we have are very few companies in the world who control most of our food supply. In fact, the vast majority of the world's food supply is controlled by just four companies. They are, for all practical purposes, monopolies, each with some degree of speciality in a certain area, making sure that basically they can set prices. Now I know there's some variation here and there in the futures markets and so on, but these companies are dominant, and they want us to buy more of their product.

Unsurprisingly, they do not want any solution to the obesity and diabetes and dementia problems that we face that might reduce the consumption of ultra-processed food because their profits depend upon us being hooked on them. And as a consequence, they love the fact that Big Pharma has now come up for us with a solution for these so called problems, which don't exist if only we changed our diets, and that those solutions can be prescribed by the world's national health services or equivalents and, as a result, will let people carry on consuming foodstuffs as if it didn't matter.

But it does matter, because we could solve this problem by first of all cracking down on the monopolies that are controlling our foodstuffs.

Secondly, by cracking down on the content of those foodstuffs so they are not addictive. Which does, in essence, require a considerable reduction in the amount of harmful sugar that is included within them.

And thirdly, we can actually attach conditions - which the government is now saying might be applied to those who want work that they take these drugs - might attach conditions instead, like, go for a walk, because that will be a lot better for you.

My point is there's an economic issue here that we need to address properly.

Treating the symptom, which is obesity or diabetes, is the wrong way to deal with this problem.

Treating it in a way that maximises the profits of the pharmaceutical industry, which, to be candid, is desperate for us to remain ill, because that is the basis for its future prosperity, has to be wrong.

Treating it by making sure that we can eat decent foodstuff is the right way to go.

And for all those who tell me, "But people won't be able to afford to buy decent foodstuff", Let me be clear; the cost of Ozempic and these other drugs will be enormous. If we instead diverted those resources into providing people with a sufficient income and a sufficient time availability so that they could eat properly, we'd solve this problem.

We could afford to do this.

In fact, it is estimated that we could cut the cost of the NHS by one third if only we tackled the problem of ultra-processed food. Think about that. That would be £60 to £70 billion a year that could be released to pay people a much better minimum wage, for example. That would help.

It would also mean that our productivity would rise, so our economy would grow.

And we would all feel better, which would mean we would be happier.

This is the answer to the problem.

The answer to the problem is not super drugs that actually simply compound the fact that neoliberal big business wants to exploit our unhappiness to pursue its own goal of profit maximization.

We have to rethink the way we look at these problems.