

The GLP-1 Maintenance Playbook

After the Last Dose

A week-by-week plan for the year after you stop, so you keep what you worked for.

12-month maintenance playbook

A4 printable edition

Before you begin

You did something hard. You changed your health, and you probably changed how you feel in your own body. This playbook exists so the next chapter goes just as well.

Coming off a GLP-1 medication is a transition, and most people are sent into it with little more than a good-luck wish. The medication was quietly doing a lot of work: turning down hunger, turning up fullness, and softening the constant background chatter about food. When it leaves your system, that work has to be picked up by something else.

That something is not willpower. It is a small set of routines, set up in advance and practiced during the weeks when they matter most. This playbook gives you those routines, one step at a time, with tools you can print, pin to your fridge, and come back to whenever you need them.

You will not need to overhaul your life. Each week has one focus. Most chapters take less than twenty minutes to read. And nothing here asks you to be perfect, only to notice early and respond calmly.

Here's to the year after, and every year after that.



A note on medical care

This playbook is for education and is not medical advice. Stopping, tapering, or adjusting any medication is a decision to make with your prescriber. If you have diabetes, kidney disease, a history of disordered eating, or another medical condition, involve your care team before changing how you eat or exercise.

Who this is for

Anyone planning to stop, pause, or reduce a GLP-1 medication such as semaglutide or tirzepatide, and anyone who already has. It works whether you stop completely or stay on a lower dose.

Inside this playbook

1 Why the year after matters — 5
The research, the biology, and why regain is not a willpower problem.

2 Before the last dose — 10
Your options, questions for your prescriber, and four setups.

3 The first 90 days — 15
Your week-by-week map through the months when appetite returns.

4 The maintenance plate — 21
Protein, fiber, and portions that keep you full on less.

5 Protecting your strength — 28
Short strength sessions to hold on to muscle.

6 When food noise returns — 34
Tools for cravings, evenings, and emotional eating.

7 Your maintenance zones — 40
A simple early-warning system and what to do in each zone.

8 Eating out, travel, and holidays — 45
Plays for restaurants, business trips, and celebrations.

9 Months 4 to 12 — 49
Loosening the structure without losing the results.

10 When to call your care team — 53
Signs it's time for more support, and your options.

Quick reference cards — 56
Printable pages for the fridge, your phone, and your care team.

How to use it

Read Chapters 1 and 2 before your last dose if you can. Then keep Chapter 3 open for the next twelve weeks.

Each two-week block has one focus, so you're never trying to change everything at once.

Tools included

- Maintenance zones
- Protein anchors and plate
- 90-day map
- Two strength sessions
- Restaurant playbook
- Trackers and check-ins

How to use this playbook

The year after your last dose has four phases. Each one asks something different of you, and each has its own chapters.



Prepare
Before the last dose
Ch. 2

Transition
Weeks 1 to 12
Ch. 3 to 7

Stabilize
Months 4 to 6
Ch. 8 and 9

New normal
Months 7 to 12
Ch. 9 and 10

Phase	What's happening	Your job
Prepare	You're still on the medication, or just stopping. Appetite is quiet.	Make the decision with your prescriber. Stock your kitchen, book your strength sessions, and record your starting numbers.
Transition	The medication clears and hunger gradually returns.	Follow the 90-day map. One focus every two weeks. Protect protein and strength above everything else.
Stabilize	Appetite has settled at its new normal. Life gets busy again.	Use your maintenance zones. Handle restaurants, travel, and holidays with a plan instead of hope.
New normal	The routines feel like yours. Structure can loosen.	Keep the few things that matter most, relax the rest, and review the year with your care team.

Start where you are

If you've already stopped, skim Chapter 2 and begin Chapter 3 at the week you're in. It's never too late to start the plan.

Keep it close

The quick reference cards at the back are designed to be printed. Put the zones card on your fridge and the restaurant card in your phone.

What successful maintainers do

Long-term research on people who keep weight off points to a short list of shared habits. None of them is dramatic. All of them are in this playbook.

Habit	What it looks like	Where to find it
Regular self-monitoring	Weighing weekly and watching the trend, plus a quick check-in on food and activity.	Chapter 7
Plenty of daily movement	People who maintain tend to be active for about an hour a day. Much of it is simply walking.	Chapter 5
Strength training	Two to three short sessions a week to protect muscle, the tissue that keeps you strong and capable.	Chapter 5
Protein and fiber at meals	Meals built to keep you full on a reasonable amount of food.	Chapter 4
Planning ahead	Deciding before the restaurant, the trip, or the holiday, not in the moment.	Chapter 8
Coping skills and support	Tools for stress and cravings, and people who know what you're working on.	Chapters 6 and 10

Maintenance is a skill, not a state

Weight loss has a finish line. Maintenance doesn't, which is why it can feel harder. The people who do it well treat it the way they'd treat any skill: they expect off weeks, notice them early, and correct course without drama. You'll practice exactly that.

Where are you starting?

Circle how well each habit is established for you today, from 1 (not yet) to 5 (automatic). Start with your lowest two.

Weekly self-monitoring	1	2	3	4	5
Daily movement	1	2	3	4	5
Strength training	1	2	3	4	5
Protein and fiber at meals	1	2	3	4	5
Planning ahead	1	2	3	4	5
Coping skills and support	1	2	3	4	5

Craving swaps

A swap works when it meets the real need behind the craving. These are starting points. Adjust them to what you actually enjoy.

The craving	What it may be about	Try instead
Something sweet after dinner	A habit that signals the meal is over	Greek yogurt with berries and cinnamon, or a cup of tea as your new “done” signal
Salty and crunchy while working	Boredom, stress, or a need for a break	A measured portion of popcorn, roasted chickpeas, or cucumbers with salt, then a short walk
Grazing while cooking dinner	Real hunger that built up since lunch	A planned afternoon snack with protein, or chewing gum while you cook
Late-night snacking	Tiredness more than hunger	Brush your teeth as a signal, have herbal tea, and go to bed a little earlier
Eating as soon as you get home	Stress from the day and a transition moment	A five-minute transition ritual: change clothes, step outside, then decide
Finishing the kids' leftovers	Habit and not wanting to waste food	Pack leftovers straight into containers, or plate a small portion for yourself on purpose

My swaps

My craving	What it's really about	What I'll try

Treats, on purpose

Some cravings are simply for a food you love. Plan it in, choose a good version, eat it sitting down without distractions, and enjoy it. That's not a slip. That's the plan working.