

GLP-1 Receptor Agonists: Aspiration risk during general anaesthesia or deep sedation



Background

GLP-1 receptor agonists (GLP-1 RAs) such as dulaglutide, liraglutide, lixisenatide, semaglutide, tirzepatide are approved in Malaysia for the management of Type 2 diabetes mellitus. Certain GLP-1 RAs are also indicated for chronic weight management.



Safety concern

- GLP-1 RAs are known to delay gastric emptying. Patients may have residual gastric contents even after routine preoperative fasting.
- Possible increased risk of pulmonary aspiration during general anaesthesia or deep sedation, which can lead to severe complications like aspiration pneumonia.



Advice for Healthcare Professionals

- Ask every patient specifically if they are taking any GLP-1 RA during pre-assessment before surgery.
- Counsel patients to inform their healthcare team that they taking a GLP-1 RA before any procedure requiring anaesthesia or sedation.
- Consider and manage the potential risk of aspiration in patients being treated with GLP-1 RAs

Please report



all **adverse events** suspected to be related to the use of GLP-1 RA-containing products to the **NPRA**.

