

With the Wind with Dr. Paul — Show 202 — Pediatric Perspectives: Weight Loss Drugs for Kids with Michelle Perro, M.D.

Host: Dr. Paul Thomas

Guest: Michelle Perro, M.D. *Pediatrician with 43 years of clinical experience in pediatrics and integrative medicine; Yale graduate; trained at Mount Sinai Medical School; former director of the pediatric emergency department at Metropolitan Hospital, New York Medical College; faculty at UCSF; Oakland Children's Hospital; environmental pediatrician specializing in GMO foods, pesticides, and environmental toxicants; CEO and founder of GMO Science (gmoscience.org); host of The New MDS podcast; author of What's Making Our Children Sick?*

Series: Pediatric Perspectives

Length: Approximately 27 minutes

Summary

In this episode of *With the Wind with Dr. Paul*, Dr. Paul Thomas is joined by integrative pediatrician Michelle Perro, M.D. for a thorough discussion on the childhood obesity epidemic and the growing use of GLP-1 agonist drugs in children.

Dr. Perro shares context on how prevalent childhood obesity has become since the 1980s, the health consequences associated with it, and why she believes ultra-processed foods, GMOs, pesticides, and environmental toxicants are the primary drivers. She then examines GLP-1 agonist drugs — how they work, why they have gained traction, and what concerns she has about their use in children who are still developing. The conversation closes with practical, actionable guidance for parents: emphasizing organic whole foods, home cooking, family movement, and microbiome support as the foundation of a real solution.

Key Points

- **01:35** — Dr. Paul welcomes back Dr. Michelle Perro and begins a detailed introduction of her background and clinical credentials.
- **04:51** — Dr. Perro contextualizes childhood obesity: approximately 20% of American children (an estimated 14.7 million) are obese; rates rose approximately 17% during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns; associated health consequences include cardiovascular disease, autoimmunity, mental health disruptions, and cancer.

- **08:21** — The role of ultra-processed foods, GMOs, and pesticides in driving obesity: Dr. Perro explains how this food environment suppresses the body's natural GLP-1 production, promotes insulin resistance, and floods children's diets with hormone-disrupting chemicals.
- **10:24** — What GLP-1 is: a naturally occurring peptide hormone produced in the gut, pancreas, and brain that signals satiety; GLP-1 agonist drugs mimic this hormone. Dr. Perro explains why these drugs appear promising on paper but raises significant concerns for use in children.
- **11:17** — Dr. Paul notes that in 2022 the American Academy of Pediatrics issued recommendations that included weight loss drugs for obese children as young as eight, and bariatric surgery for those as young as 13. Dr. Perro adds that GLP-1 drugs are now approved for children 12 and older, and since 2023 pediatric prescribing of these drugs has increased approximately 65%.
- **12:27** — Weight, muscle, and metabolic consequences: weight returns when the drug is stopped — and the regained weight is fat rather than the muscle lost during treatment; children have limited muscle mass to begin with, and muscle is the body's most metabolically active tissue.
- **13:38** — Additional side effects discussed: gastroparesis, pancreatitis, gallbladder disease; the drug is approved for Medicaid/Medicare at approximately \$12,000 per year, often without required nutritional counseling. A black box warning exists for increased risk of depression and suicidal ideation; the drug also affects dopamine and has been associated with apathy.
- **16:32** — Dr. Perro notes that a generic version of one of these drugs was found available on Amazon without a prescription, raising concern about teens obtaining and sharing GLP-1 drugs — similar to how ADHD medications are already known to circulate in high school settings.
- **18:51** — Every class of pesticides Dr. Perro has reviewed — including organophosphates, glyphosate, carbamates, pyrethroids, and organochlorines — functions as an endocrine disruptor and obesogen; average food contains at least six pesticides; these do not act in isolation but in combination ("negative synergism"); plasticizers and phthalates are additional obesogenic chemicals to reduce exposure to.
- **20:29** — Practical guidance: eat organic (and regenerative when possible); cook at home; batch-prepare meals on Sundays; avoid ultra-processed foods and toxic seed oils; get children involved in food preparation; shop at farmer's markets, Sprouts, Trader Joe's, Costco, or grow your own.
- **23:45** — From Dr. Perro's upcoming book: the importance of fiber (soluble and insoluble — from apples, pectin, inulin-containing foods like onions) in feeding the microbiome; specific gut microbes support healthy weight and also sustain the body's own natural GLP-1 production.
- **26:06** — Closing take-home message: avoid weight-loss drugs for children; build healthy eating habits as a family; promote movement together; don't single out or shame the child who is struggling; parents modeling behavior — including putting down their own phones — makes a difference.

Quote

"On paper, those drugs look amazing. All kinds of health benefits, cardiovascular benefits, brain health benefits. They're the best thing since sliced bread. But, Paul, as you and I know, there's no magic bullet for this." — Michelle Perro, M.D.

Resources & Links

- GMO Science
<https://gmoscience.org>
 - The New MDS Podcast (hosted by Dr. Michelle Perro)
<https://gmoscience.org/the-new-mds/>
 - *What's Making Our Children Sick?* by Michelle Perro, M.D. (no URL confirmed — omitted per standing policy)
 - Kids First 4Ever
<https://www.kidsfirst4ever.com>
-

Disclaimer

The information shared in this episode is for educational and informational purposes only and is not intended as medical advice. It does not establish a doctor–patient relationship. Always consult a qualified healthcare professional regarding medical decisions.
