
COURSE RESOURCE

MUSCLE-PRESERVATION CHECKLIST

Client handout | Working With GLP-1 Clients: for Personal Trainers

GLP-1 medications drive fast, appetite-driven weight loss — and when weight comes off fast, some of it can come from muscle unless you actively defend it. Muscle is what keeps you strong, mobile, and metabolically healthy, so protecting it is the whole game. Work through this checklist every week. Tick what you did; circle what you missed; bring it to your session.

SCOPE OF PRACTICE

This is a training and habit checklist from your coach, not medical advice. Your coach does not diagnose conditions, prescribe or adjust your GLP-1 medication, or set your dose — those decisions belong to your prescribing clinician. If something on this list feels off (dizziness, unusual weakness, appetite you can't manage), your coach will document it and refer you back to your clinician or dietitian.

THE SIX NON-NEGOTIABLES

If you protect these six things, you protect your muscle. Everything else is a detail.

- ☐ 1. Resistance train 2-3x this week
- ☐ 2. Hit my daily protein target
- ☐ 3. Progress my training (added reps, load, or a set vs. last time)
- ☐ 4. Prioritise sleep (aim 7-9 hours most nights)
- ☐ 5. Kept weight loss to a steady, gradual pace
- ☐ 6. Tracked my strength, not just the scale

1. RESISTANCE TRAIN 2-3X/WEEK

Resistance training is the single strongest signal telling your body to keep the muscle it has. Aim for full-body sessions that cover the major patterns.

- ☐ A push (e.g. dumbbell or machine chest press, push-up)
- ☐ A pull (e.g. row, lat pulldown, assisted pull-up)
- ☐ A squat pattern (e.g. goblet squat, leg press, sit-to-stand)

- ☐ A hinge pattern (e.g. hip thrust, Romanian deadlift, back extension)
- ☐ Working sets taken to roughly 1-3 reps short of failure, in the 6-15 rep range

WHY IT MATTERS

In a calorie deficit, the body will happily shed tissue it thinks it doesn't need. Lifting hard and regularly is how you prove it still needs the muscle. Miss the lifting, and the deficit does what it wants.

2. HIT YOUR PROTEIN TARGET

Protein is the raw material for muscle. On a GLP-1, appetite drops sharply, so protein rarely happens by accident — you have to make it the priority on the plate. Your coach or dietitian will set your personal number; use this checklist to hit it.

- ☐ Ate a protein source at every meal (eggs, dairy, meat, fish, tofu, legumes)
- ☐ Ate protein first when full quickly — before the sides fill you up
- ☐ Kept an easy backup handy (Greek yogurt, protein shake, cottage cheese, jerky)
- ☐ Spread protein across the day rather than saving it all for dinner

KEY SIGNAL

If reduced appetite means you're consistently missing your protein target, that's a documentation-and-referral moment, not a push-harder moment. Tell your coach; a dietitian may need to adjust the plan.

3. PROGRESS THE TRAINING

Doing the same workout forever tells the body 'this is enough' — and 'enough' shrinks as you lose weight. Give it a reason to hold muscle by nudging the challenge upward over time.

- ☐ Beat something from last time: one more rep, a little more weight, or an extra set
- ☐ Logged today's lifts so next time has a target to beat
- ☐ Kept good form as the priority — progress the load only when the movement is clean

4. PRIORITISE SLEEP

Recovery is when the body actually responds to your training. Short or broken sleep undercuts strength, appetite control, and how well muscle is retained.

- ☐ Aimed for a consistent 7-9 hours most nights
- ☐ Kept a regular bed and wake time, even on weekends
- ☐ Wound down without screens for the last stretch before bed

5. DON'T LOSE WEIGHT TOO FAST

Faster is not better here. The quicker the scale drops, the harder it is for training and protein to keep pace — and the more muscle is at risk. Steady, gradual loss protects muscle far better than a crash.

- ☐ Weight is trending down gradually, not falling off a cliff
- ☐ I'm still able to eat enough to hit protein and fuel my training
- ☐ Strength is holding or climbing (not sliding as the weight drops)

KEY SIGNAL

Very rapid loss, strength falling week over week, or being unable to eat enough to train are all signs to flag. Your coach documents these and refers you to your clinician — pace is a medical decision, not a coaching one.

6. TRACK STRENGTH, NOT JUST WEIGHT

The scale can't tell muscle from fat. Your strength log can. If the number on the scale falls while your lifts hold or rise, that's the win you're after: losing fat while keeping muscle.

Track weekly	Where to log it	Done
Body weight (same day/time)	Notes app or journal	☐
A key lift's top set (reps x load)	Training log	☐
How I felt / energy in sessions	1-10 quick note	☐
Waist or how clothes fit	Optional monthly note	☐

EVIDENCE NOTE

The direction of this advice — resistance training plus adequate protein helps preserve lean mass during weight loss — reflects the general consensus in exercise and nutrition

science. Specific figures are deliberately left out here; the course team will attach verified citations in the full program materials.

THIS WEEK'S SCORE

Count your ticks against the Six Non-Negotiables. Aim to improve on last week, not to be perfect. Bring this sheet to your next session so your coach can help you close the gaps: _____
/ 6 non-negotiables hit this week.