



Tirzepatide (Mounjaro®)

Information for patients using tirzepatide to support weight loss

What is Tirzepatide?

Tirzepatide is a once-weekly injection which helps with weight loss and type 2 diabetes. It slows down how quickly food leaves the stomach and helps reduce how much food you eat. It can help you lose weight but **only when used alongside increased physical activity and dietary changes**. There are more details on this in the section on wraparound support.

The aim is for you to lose at least 5% of your body weight over 6 months on the maximum dose of tirzepatide that you can tolerate. This will be discussed and reviewed with you by your prescriber.

How long will I take it?

NHS South Yorkshire will fund tirzepatide for weight loss for a maximum of two years unless you are on a waiting list for bariatric surgery, in which case you will be prescribed tirzepatide until your surgery. Tirzepatide will only be prescribed if you are also on a wraparound support programme. Your G.P./ clinicians will refer you to this before starting tirzepatide and you will be prescribed tirzepatide after attending the first session. There may be a waiting list to join the wraparound programme, but you will be contacted when you have a place.

If you miss two sessions of the wraparound programme (in the absence of exceptional circumstances) the provider will notify your practice and tirzepatide will be stopped.

What support will I get from the GP practice while I'm on tirzepatide?

The GP practice supporting you to lose weight will start you on a low dose of tirzepatide and show you how to inject the drug yourself. They will see you every 4 weeks to review how you are doing, check your weight and review whether your dose of tirzepatide needs changing. Once you have been on the highest dose that works

for you for around six months, the practice will review whether you still need to be on tirzepatide. They may reduce how often you are seen to every three months if you are stable.

The practice will give you a prescription for one injection pen of tirzepatide at a time, which lasts for 4 weeks.

The practice will also check on any other conditions that you have that are affected by your weight (e.g. diabetes, high blood pressure). Your medications for these may need changing before or as you lose weight. If you have diabetes, you may be asked to monitor your glucose levels more often.

What side effects could I have?

The side effects are different for everyone, and some will ease off over time.

The most common side effects are feeling sick, being sick, diarrhoea, or constipation. Some people have other symptoms, for example, stomachache, indigestion, burping and bloating.

Like all medications there is also the risk of more serious side effects. This includes an inflamed pancreas (acute pancreatitis). This can cause severe stomach and back pain which doesn't go away. See a doctor or seek medical help immediately if you have these symptoms.

How can I reduce side effects?

Side effects are made worse by eating more food than your body needs.

If your stomach has not had time to empty and you eat more food, you may feel unwell. Until now, it may have been common for you not to notice signals from your body which tell you when you have eaten enough. This can make it hard to know what a suitable and satisfying amount of food

is and make it easier to overeat. For example, you may regularly eat large meals and have snacks between meals, even when you are not hungry. Or you may always clear your plate, no matter what the portion size is.

This medication will reduce your appetite and help you notice when you feel full. You may not be hungry at the times you used to be. Once you start eating, you will feel satisfied sooner and for longer.

Continuing with the same food habits you have had in the past and ignoring the body's signals will cause side effects. You can help reduce side effects by following these tips:

- Eat in small portions.
- Eat less fatty and spicy foods.
- Keep hydrated.
- Space out your food over the day.
- Avoid lying down soon after eating.
- Learn to eat to your appetite to avoid overeating.

Safety Advice

Do not take tirzepatide if you are ill (vomiting, diarrhoea).

Stop and seek help if you have severe stomach or back pain (possible pancreatitis).

Use a non-oral contraception or a barrier method of contraception for 4 weeks after starting or changing dose.

Stop at least 1 month (but ideally 3 months) before trying for a baby.

When you lose weight over a prolonged period, it is important that your diet gives your body all the nutrients it needs to stay healthy now and in the future. You should eat some protein with every meal and do some strength-building exercises whilst you are on tirzepatide. The wraparound support team will give some useful advice on how to gradually build more physical activity into your lifestyle. You may also wish to purchase an over-the-counter multivitamin supplement if your appetite is

greatly reduced and you struggle to eat a balanced diet.

What is the wraparound support programme?

The wraparound programme is a nine-month, evidence-based lifestyle change programme for people who have been prescribed tirzepatide for weight loss. This helps you lose weight safely and reduces the weight you regain once tirzepatide is stopped.

Built on evidence-based behavioural change methods, the course aims to:

- Support patients to develop sustainable habits that improve metabolic health, physical wellbeing, and quality of life.
- Promote balanced nutrition, energy regulation, and satiety (helping you feel full earlier).
- Provide practical tools to make informed decisions about movement, food and self-care.
- Improve your understanding of how your diet affects your overall health.
- Provide you with easily accessible, non-judgemental support on your weight loss journey.

You will need to attend the first session of the wraparound programme before you are prescribed tirzepatide. There may be a waiting list for the programme depending on demand.

Useful resources

Information on the wraparound support programme

<https://healthieryou.reedwellbeing.com/about-the-programme/>

Advice on eating well and exercising alongside other lifestyle tips

www.nhs.uk/live-well

Strength exercise ideas from

NHS. www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/strength-exercises/

[South Yorkshire weight management booklet](#)