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<https://hertsandwestessex.ics.nhs.uk>

## **Introduction of Tirzepatide to support weight management for appropriate eligible patients**

From Monday 23 June, a new weight loss drug called Tirzepatide, will start becoming available for use in primary care settings.

Tirzepatide, which is often distributed under the brand name of Mounjaro, can help to promote weight loss when used by patients alongside a calorie-controlled diet and a more active daily lifestyle.

Tirzepatide is being rolled out nationally over a few years. Initially it will only be available on the NHS to patients with the highest medical need.

In line with NHS England guidance, this treatment will only be available initially for a small number of eligible patients whose body mass index is above 40 and have been diagnosed with four or more obesity-related health conditions. There is more information on eligibility below.

Patients should be aware that it will be some time before the first eligible patients are able to access Tirzepatide. From 23 June GPs or other healthcare professionals can start a discussion with potentially eligible patients about using Tirzepatide as part of their overall weight-loss journey.

For patients in Hertfordshire and West Essex, Tirzepatide for weight loss will be available through a new service that is in the process of being set up. This service will provide access to Tirzepatide injections as part of a 9-month healthy lifestyle programme.

## **What is Tirzepatide (Mounjaro®)?**

Tirzepatide is a weekly injection used to support weight management when combined with healthy lifestyle changes. It works by mimicking natural gut hormones that are released after eating. It helps with weight loss by making you feel full more quickly and for longer and slowing down how quickly food leaves your stomach

**Who might be eligible?** NHS England have defined who will be eligible for Tirzepatide from 23 June 2025. To be considered, you must have a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 40\* or more, **and** have at least four of the five stated eight related health conditions below

These are:

- Type 2 diabetes

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- High blood pressure (hypertension) — requiring treatment with medication
- Heart and blood vessel disease (cardiovascular disease) — such as ischaemic heart disease, stroke, heart failure, or peripheral vascular disease. (This does not include conditions such as atrial fibrillation or valvular heart disease.)
- Obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA) — confirmed by a sleep study and requiring treatment, such as CPAP.
- High cholesterol or triglycerides — usually based on blood test results or if you take medication like statins.

\* If you are from a South Asian, Chinese, other Asian, Middle Eastern, Black African or African-Caribbean ethnic backgrounds your BMI should be 37.5 or more.

Your GP or healthcare team can assess whether you appear to meet the eligibility criteria and may refer you for the service. A dedicated team within the local NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) will do a final review of each patient referred by their GP to confirm the treatment is appropriate. The ICB team will share details of approved patients with the new service once it goes live.

There may be a wait before the new service contacts you. Please be patient and if you have any health concerns contact your GP practice as you usually would.

**Your GP or other healthcare professional will not be able to prescribe Tirzepatide directly. You can only get it through the new service.**

Please note: the eligibility criteria for the first year are not the same as the eligibility criteria set out in the NICE recommendations. This is due to the national phased rollout.

### **What Happens If You're Referred?**

- If you are referred, a healthcare professional from the service will review your full clinical history and work with you to discuss the risks, benefits, and expectations of treatment. A final decision will be made together with you, based on whether Tirzepatide is appropriate for your individual circumstances.
- If treatment goes ahead, you will need to take part in a 9-month healthy lifestyle wraparound support programme, which includes help with food choices, physical activity, and behaviour change.
- If you are starting on the medicine, you will be reviewed regularly to check your progress and whether the medicine should continue.

### **What if Tirzepatide isn't right for me?**

Tirzepatide (Mounjaro®) may not be suitable for everyone — even for those who meet the eligibility criteria. Tirzepatide (Mounjaro®) is not recommended if you are pregnant or planning to get pregnant, breastfeeding, or if you have certain health conditions. Some people may choose not to use it or may benefit more from other types of support.

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The NHS offers a range of free weight management programmes designed to help people lose weight and make sustainable lifestyle changes. These are often based on nutrition, physical activity, and behaviour change, and are available to many people without the need for specialist medication.

If Tirzepatide isn't the right option, your GP can refer you to a local programme — or in some cases, you can refer yourself directly for support.

- **Healthier You NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme** - a 9-month face-to-face group programme, or digital 1:1 support to make healthy lifestyle changes which will reduce your risk of Type 2 diabetes and help you lose weight if you need to. <https://www.lwtcsupport.co.uk/>
- **NHS National Digital Weight Management Programme** - a 12-week programme appropriate for patients living with obesity and have Diabetes and/or High Blood Pressure. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/digital-weight-management/how-to-access-the-programme/>
- **My Healthy Weight Programme** provided by TBC Healthcare - a 14-week programme for Hertfordshire residents living with obesity and who have not recently attended a free 12-week weight loss programme. Patients can self-refer via the TBC website. <https://tbchealthcare.co.uk/>

