King's College Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust

Pharmacotherapy for weight management

Information for patients referred to the Specialist Weight Management Service at King's College Hospital, Denmark Hill

Your clinical team at King's College Hospital thinks you may benefit from medicine to support weight loss. This leaflet explains the treatment, how eligibility is assessed and what to expect if you join the pathway.

Important

Being given this leaflet does not mean that you will automatically be eligible for treatment. The Specialist Weight Management Service will assess your Body Mass Index (BMI), other health conditions and the relevant clinical criteria.

What is pharmacotherapy?

Pharmacotherapy means treatment with medicine. The medicines used by the service are GLP-1 based treatments. They help regulate appetite and slow digestion, which may reduce hunger and food cravings.

Which medicines may be used?

- The service currently prescribes Mounjaro or Wegovy.
- These medicines are injected under the skin once a week.
- Your dose is usually increased every 4 weeks until the most suitable dose is reached.
- The dose may be reduced if you experience side effects.

How effective can treatment be?

Clinical trial results show that about 8 in 10 people prescribed this type of treatment lose at least 5% of their body weight after 6 months. Some people may lose up to 20%.

Results vary, and medication works best alongside support with nutrition, physical activity and behaviour change.

What happens if I agree to be referred?

1	**Referral** Tell the team caring for you at King's College Hospital if you would like to be referred.
2	**Eligibility review** The Specialist Weight Management Service checks if you meet the clinical criteria.
3	**Initial assessment** If eligible, you will be invited for assessment by the specialist team, which may include a doctor, dietitian and physiotherapist.
4	**Treatment education** You will attend an education session about the medicine and learn how to give the weekly injection yourself. A prescription is issued after attendance where treatment is appropriate.
5	**Ongoing support** You will receive regular support with nutrition, physical activity and longer-term behaviour change, alongside prescription reviews.

Your appointment pathway

When	What to expect	Usual format
Starting treatment	Assessment, treatment education and self-injection training.	Face-to-face
First 6 months	4 online education sessions every 2 to 4 weeks with a focus on nutrition, activity and behavioural support to help you make longer-term lifestyle changes. An appointment with the dietitian and physiotherapist, plus pharmacist telephone reviews approximately every 2 months.	Online and telephone, with face-to-face reviews as needed
At 6 months	Doctor review and weight check. If you have lost more than 5% of your starting weight, you may continue on the pathway.	Face-to-face
6 months to 2 years	Follow-up approximately every 2 to 3 months.	Usually online or telephone
At 2 years	Final doctor review and discharge back to your GP.	Clinical review

Why attendance matters

The medicine is only one part of the programme. Regular appointments provide wraparound care to support healthy eating, physical activity and psychological wellbeing. This combined approach gives you the best chance of benefiting from treatment.

Please attend every booked appointment

If you repeatedly do not attend, you may be discharged from the service. If you cannot attend, contact the team as early as possible using the details given in your appointment letter.

Possible side effects

The most common side effects are feeling sick (nausea) and vomiting. These can often be managed by reducing the dose. Your clinical team will discuss side effects and explain what action to take before you begin treatment.

Serious side effects

Rarely, serious side effects may require urgent medical assessment. Please follow the advice below and the safety information given by your clinical team.

Possible pancreatitis

If you develop severe stomach or abdominal pain that spreads to your back, please attend the Emergency Department for an urgent assessment.

Sudden changes to your eyesight

GLP-1 medicines may be linked to a very rare eye condition called non-arteritic anterior ischaemic optic neuropathy (NAION). It can cause sudden, painless blurred or reduced vision in one eye and may lead to permanent sight loss. If you notice a sudden, painless change or loss of vision in one eye, seek urgent medical advice straight away.

Additional support

Some patients will be offered additional support from a psychologist and face-to-face or online appointments with a dietician and/or a physiotherapist, depending on their individual needs.

Your next step

If you want to be referred

Tell the King's College Hospital team currently caring for you.

After referral

The Specialist Weight Management Team will contact you to arrange an appointment if you meet the eligibility criteria.

Questions to ask at your appointment

- ☐ Which medicine may be suitable for me?
- ☐ How will this treatment interact with my other medicines or health conditions?
- ☐ What should I do if I have side effects?
- ☐ Who should I contact if I cannot attend an appointment?

Please remember

Eligibility and treatment decisions are made after clinical assessment. Do not start, stop or change any medicine without advice from your healthcare professional.

MyChart

Our MyChart app and website lets you securely access parts of your health record with us, giving you more control over your care. To sign up or for help, call us on 020 3299 4618 or email kings.mychart@nhs.net. Visit www.kch.nhs.uk/mychart to find out more.

Sharing your information

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust has partnered with Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust through the King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre. We are working together to give our patients the best possible care, so you might find we invite you for appointments at Guy's or St Thomas' hospitals. King's College Hospital and Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trusts share an electronic patient record system, which means information about your health record can be accessed safely and securely by health and care staff at both Trusts. For more information visit www.kch.nhs.uk.

Care provided by students

We provide clinical training where our nursing students get practical experience by treating patients. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you do not want students to be involved in your care. Your treatment will not be affected by your decision.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. They can also pass on praise or thanks to our teams.

Tel: **020 3299 4618**
Email: **kings.pals@nhs.net**

If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact our Interpreting and Accessible Communication Support on 020 3299 4618 or email kings.access@nhs.net

PL1396.1 November 2026
Review date November 2029
Corporate Comms: 5143