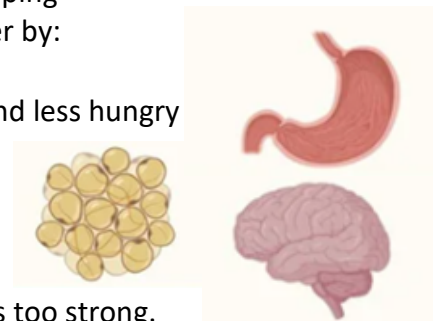


Getting the best from obesity management medications

These medications include Liraglutide (Saxenda), Semaglutide (Ozempic & Wegovy), and Tirzepatide (Mounjaro).

These medicines help to manage the chronic, relapsing disease of obesity by helping the body's usual system for balancing appetite and storing energy to work better by:

- Sending signals to the appetite centre in the brain that you are feeling full and less hungry
- Slowing how food moves through the stomach
- They are working if they are helping you to be healthy and strong - **it's not just about losing weight**
- They don't work in the same way for everyone. Some people's bodies respond to these medications at all and some people have a response that is too strong.
- Obesity management medications help to improve health problems linked with obesity and they lead to weight loss for some people



General advice

To get the best results from these medications, and reduce possible side effects, both *how* and *what* you eat are important.

- **Meal pattern:** Aim for 3 meals per day, with snacks in between meals if needed. Even if you don't feel hungry, it's important to have a regular pattern of eating to ensure you get the nutrients needed for good health – reducing the size of the meal instead of skipping it altogether.



- **Mindful eating:** Eating slowly gives you time to get used to new feelings of fullness with these medications. Taking time to plan your meals and focus on the enjoyable tastes and textures as you eat also helps.



- **Portions:** When you start a new medication it's difficult to tell how much it will reduce appetite. Start by reducing portions by about 1/3 until you learn it's effect on your appetite

- **Protein:** Include protein (fish / meat / chicken / eggs / beans / milk / cheese / yoghurt / Quorn) at every meal to meet your needs.

- **Fibre:** The recommended amount of fibre for health is ~25-30g daily. This can be achieved by including lots of vegetables / fruit + some high fibre grains (wholegrain bread / rice / pasta / cereal / potato with skin on) at each meal.



- **Fat:** Avoid fried foods, fatty meats, high fat snacks, or adding a lot of butter or oils to meals. Including high fat foods may cause you to feel unwell.

- **Fluid:** Aim for a minimum of 2 litres of water each day, unless you are advised otherwise by your medical team. Avoid fizzy drinks when taking these medications as they can cause nausea and abdominal pain.



- **Continue to take recommended supplementation:** If you've had bariatric surgery it is important to continue taking your prescribed nutrition supplements including Iron, Calcium and Vitamin D, Multivitamins and Vitamin B12. If additional supplements have been recommended for you, you should take these as advised by your doctor or dietitian.



Your individual COM Nutrition Care Plan that you agreed with the dietitian is your best guide to where nutrition fits with long-term obesity care for you.

We recommend you go back and read through it again to make sure the foundations are in place when starting obesity medications

Staying well-nourished

- Eating less food can mean missing out on nutrients like protein, fibre, iron, calcium and vitamins
- The quality of the foods you eat matters even more when portions are smaller – plan meals to include protein, fibre and lots of variety.
- If you are struggling to get enough nutrition while taking these medications the team may talk to you about adjusting the dose of the medication and adding a multivitamin
- Protein is an important nutrient that the body uses for repair and growth of cells, making hormones and enzymes, and supports healthy muscle.
- The amount of protein you need depends on your current body weight. You can discuss your individualised requirements with the dietitian. You can also refer to the recommendations within your nutrition care plan.
- If you are struggling to meet your protein needs using standard foods there are options with added protein levels e.g. prescribed protein drinks, protein milk, protein bars, protein yogurts, protein water and protein powders that can help.
- Eating your protein food (meat, poultry, fish, eggs, beans, dairy foods, tofu, nuts) first at mealtimes helps to make sure you don't miss out if you feel full before you have finished your meal.
- If your body is losing weight, you want most of that weight to be fat tissue, not muscle tissue. We focus on protein and resistance training to help you to keep muscle as healthy and strong as possible and to protect physical function.
- The easiest way to eat enough protein is by including some protein at every meal and snack. Everyday rich sources of protein include meats, fish, poultry, eggs, milk, cheese, yogurts, nuts, beans, tofu, lentils, soya and Quorn. You can use this table below to help choose options that help you to meet your protein needs



Resistance Training

Resistance training involves movements that challenge our muscles by resisting weight or force. Doing resistance training repeatedly and consistently, builds stronger muscles.

We recommend light resistance work to protect muscle health while taking obesity medications. Start light (Female 1-3kg, Male 2-5kg)) and gradually build up as you feel able. Repeat the movement until your muscles start to feel heavy or tired. Aim to do some resistance training 2-3 days a week.

1 Arm Curl



2 Front Arm Raise



3 Side arm raise



4 Overhead Arm Raise



5 Leg Straightening



6 Chair stand



7 Toe Stand



8 Side Leg Raise



Your individual COM plan that you agreed with the physiotherapist is your best guide to where movement fits with long-term obesity care for you

We recommend you go back and read through this again to make sure the foundations are in place when starting obesity medications

Long-term medication management

- Obesity medicines work for as long as you take them, so think of them as a long-term treatment.
- Finding the right dose and type, and finding the best balance of benefits against any side effects can take time and may change over time. **It is best to be taking the right dose for your body, and this may not be the highest dose.**
- Ozempic is reimbursable for people living with Type 2 Diabetes, and Saxenda is currently reimbursed for patients living with an initial body mass index of ≥ 35 kg/m² with prediabetes and increased risk of cardiovascular disease. Cost can be a significant barrier for accessing these medications if they are not reimbursable for you. It is important to remember they are long term medications if you are planning to pay for the medications yourself.

Managing side effects

- Some side effects such as feeling sick, vomiting, diarrhoea or constipation are common, especially when starting the medication or increasing the dose.
- These usually settle 4-6 weeks after each dose increase.
- If you continue to experience side effects such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, constipation, or there is a very strong effect, suppressing appetite to a point where you can't eat all of the nutrients you need, this is a sign that you may need to reduce to a lower dose of the medication. You should discuss this with the COM team to weigh up the risks and benefits of the medication and the current dose.

Common side effects	How to manage them
Feeling sick (nausea), vomiting, Sulphur burps	• Eat slowly • Ensure a regular meal pattern • Reduce portion sizes • Avoid drinking large amounts of fluids during meals • Avoid spicy, high sugar and high fat foods
Constipation	• Increase fibre & fluid • Regular gentle activity • Consider a laxative
Diarrhoea	• Avoid high fat foods • Increase soluble fibre
If these symptoms continue discuss dose adjustment with the COM Team	

When to talk to the COM team

- Vomiting or diarrhoea that happens most days and won't stop
- You can't keep food or fluids down
- Severe or lasting tummy pain
- Rapid weight loss, weakness or dizziness
- Ongoing low appetite with very low food intake (<1200 kcs / day)