The Ridings Medical Group
Caring for our community

Mounjaro (tirzepatide)
Initiation

As discussed during our telephone consultation, you have been prescribed Mounjaro (tirzepatide) to support you with your weight loss. This guide provides key details regarding your dosing schedule, injection guidance, common side effect management, and important safety symptoms to monitor.

Dosing and Administration

Mounjaro is delivered via a subcutaneous single-dose auto-injector pen once weekly. You may administer it at any time of day, with or without food. Exact steps can be found below:

- **Starting Dose:** 2.5 mg once weekly for the initial **4 weeks**. This is an introductory dose designed to allow your body to adjust to the medication; it is not the long-term therapeutic dose. The plan is gradually titrate dose until reaching 15mg (or whichever dose you are able to tolerate)
- **Injection Sites:** Subcutaneous tissue of the abdomen (at least 2 inches away from the belly button), front of the thighs, or back of the upper arm (if assisted by another person).
- **Site Rotation:** Rotate your injection site each week to prevent skin irritation or lipodystrophy.
- **Storage:** Keep pens in the refrigerator between 2°C to 8°C in the original carton to protect from light. If needed, an individual pen may be kept at room temperature up to 30°C for up to 4 weeks (28 days). Do not freeze.
- **Video Guide:** For a step-by-step visual guide on how to inject, please watch: How to use the Mounjaro pen: Step -by-step guide.
- **Needle Disposal:** Dispose of used needles in your provided sharps bin. Do not put them in normal household waste. When your sharps bin is full, please contact your local council to arrange for its safe collection.

Managing Common Side Effects

The most frequent side effects associated with Mounjaro involve the gastrointestinal system, particularly during the first few weeks or following a dose increase.

Side Effect	Practical Management Strategies
Nausea	Eat smaller, more frequent meals. Avoid greasy, fried, spicy, or heavily sweetened foods. Remain upright for at least 30 minutes after eating. Bland foods (crackers, toast, rice) are often better tolerated.

Side Effect	Practical Management Strategies
Early Satiety / Fullness	Stop eating as soon as you begin to feel satisfied. Overeating can significantly trigger nausea and stomach discomfort.
Constipation	Increase daily water intake significantly. Incorporate dietary fiber gradually (fruits, vegetables, whole grains) and maintain regular physical activity.
Diarrhea / Upset Stomach	Stay well-hydrated with electrolyte-rich fluids or water. Avoid dairy, high-fat foods, and caffeine until symptoms resolve.
Fatigue / Mild Headache	Ensure consistent hydration throughout the day. Mild symptoms often diminish as your body adapts to the medication.
Reduced Appetite / Nutritional Gaps	Because you will be eating less, make sure your meals are nutrient-dense. You may want to consider taking a daily over-the-counter multivitamin supplement to ensure you are meeting your basic nutritional requirements while your overall food intake is reduced.

When to Seek Immediate Medical Attention

While severe adverse events are uncommon, you must be aware of serious complications requiring urgent evaluation:

- **Suspected Pancreatitis:** Severe, persistent abdominal pain that may radiate to your back, with or without vomiting. If this occurs, stop taking Mounjaro immediately and go to the nearest emergency department.
- **Severe Dehydration or Kidney Issues:** Persistent vomiting or diarrhea leading to an inability to keep fluids down, extreme dizziness, lightheadedness, or significantly decreased urine output.
- **Gallbladder Symptoms:** Pain in the upper right quadrant of your abdomen, fever, jaundice (yellowing of skin or eyes), or clay-colored stools.
- **Severe Allergic Reaction:** Swelling of the face, lips, tongue, or throat; difficulty breathing or swallowing; or severe skin rash/hives.
- **Hypoglycemia (Low Blood Sugar):** Symptoms such as shakiness, sweating, confusion, fast heart rate, or dizziness (primarily a concern if taking concurrent insulin or sulfonylureas).

Intended Targets

Mounjaro can lead to significant and clinically meaningful weight loss when combined with lifestyle changes. However, clinical prescribing guidelines dictate that you must achieve a weight loss of at least 5% of your initial body weight by the six-month mark of treatment. If this 5% target is not met, the medication will be safely discontinued.

Managing Loose Skin

Significant weight loss can sometimes lead to loose skin. While genetics and age play a big role in skin elasticity, you can support your skin by staying well-hydrated and applying a daily moisturizer. Incorporating resistance training (such as lifting weights) into your exercise routine can also help build muscle underneath the skin, which can improve its overall appearance. Remember that your skin takes time to adapt to your new body shape.

Lifestyle and Behavioural Support

As part of this service, it is a clinical requirement that all patients are referred to a lifestyle and behavioural weight loss provider. Mounjaro is most effective when used alongside meaningful dietary and lifestyle changes. Please note that your active engagement with this weight loss provider is a mandatory condition of your prescription. Failure to engage with this support service may result in your treatment being discontinued.

Basic Diet and Physical Activity Guidance

While you will receive detailed advice from your lifestyle and behavioural weight loss provider, starting to build healthy habits now is essential for your success. We recommend focusing on a balanced diet and gradually increasing your physical activity. For trustworthy, foundational advice, please explore the following NHS resources:

- The NHS Eatwell Guide: For understanding a balanced diet.
- NHS Physical Activity Guidelines for Adults: For recommended weekly exercise levels.
- NHS Better Health - Lose Weight: For general weight loss tips and free tools.

Next Steps and Follow-Up

We intend to review your treatment after 4 weeks. Assuming all is going well at that point, we will titrate your dose. Needless to say, if you are having significant side effects, please do not hesitate to contact the practice. The best method to contact us is by sending an online consultation.