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**NHS**

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# FRESH START

## **Tier 3 Specialist Weight Management Service**

**Department of Nutrition and Dietetics,  
St George's Hospital**

## What is the 'Fresh start' programme?

The 'Fresh Start' programme is a six-month, intensive weight management course which offers education and advice on changing your eating habits, mindful eating, goal setting, psychology and exercise. The programme aims to support you in making the dietary and lifestyle adjustments needed to promote safe and long-term weight loss.

As you probably realise there are no easy fixes; most people who come to our clinics have been trying to reduce their weight for years. Some people are often interested in surgery for weight loss (Bariatric Surgery). While surgery can be a very effective treatment, good results are only seen if significant lifestyle changes are made. To attend this course, you do not have to be interested in bariatric surgery, but you will have the opportunity to discuss the path to surgery if this is something you have considered.

You will be encouraged to make changes in a step-by-step manner. Our attitudes towards food and our eating habits are formed at a very young age and are strongly ingrained, so it is not surprising that changing them takes time.

Whilst we will look at practical strategies to improve our diets, the behavioural approach of this programme will also encourage you to investigate the factors that prevent us from making changes as well as the things that help.

We will help you to make the transition from dieting with strict rules and lists of good or bad foods, to being more flexible and realistic about what you eat and your approach to weight loss. It is also about learning how to accept and value yourself for who you are, regardless of weight or shape.

## Who can attend the programme?

Adults with a BMI of  $>40 \text{ kg/m}^2$  or those with a BMI of  $30 \text{ kg/m}^2$  with qualifying comorbidities and who are registered with a GP in Croydon, Kingston, Merton, Richmond, Sutton or Wandsworth or are under the care of the Specialist Weight Management service at St George's are eligible for the 'Fresh Start' programme.

## The Fresh Start Team:

The 'Fresh Start' programme is led by a specialist healthcare team with vast experience and a genuine interest in helping patients to lose weight. This team includes:

- **Consultant Physician (endocrinologist)**
- **Specialist Dietitian**
- **Clinical Psychologists**
- **Physical Activity Specialists**

## What do we offer?

**Initial assessment:** A thorough initial assessment will be provided to ensure our healthcare team have a detailed understanding of your present health and lifestyle so that we can then tailor your programme to your needs. We will support and encourage you to be actively involved in devising your treatment plan.

**Group Education:** The treatment plan will consist of group sessions, with the option of a one-on-one programme in very exceptional circumstances. Dietitians, Psychologists and Physical Activity Specialists will lead twice monthly group education sessions, which will be given either face-

to-face or virtually. Each session can last up to two hours, with a total of 12 sessions offered over the course of the six-month programme. These sessions will provide you with practical advice on how to improve your diet and physical activity levels, as well as psychological support to assist you in making lifestyle changes.

**Physical activity:** Each education session will be followed by a fortnightly physical activity session lasting 30 minutes.

## What will we expect of you?

- We will need to collect a lot of information about you, including your dietary habits, physical activity levels and emotional wellbeing. At the start and end of the programme, we will ask you to complete detailed questionnaires.
- Before we can begin your treatment, we may need you to undertake a series of medical tests or see other specialists to discover the possible causes or implications of your weight.
- We will expect you to attend at least 75% of all education sessions throughout the course of the six months.
- We hope you will find the programme interesting and motivational and will encourage you to participate and freely comment during the sessions.
- We will expect you to show commitment to increasing your physical activity levels through attending our programmes on a regular basis, or through sharing information about other activities in which you participate.

- Weight loss surgery may be explored in a small proportion of patients. Patients who show engagement and appropriate weight loss over the course of the programme may be referred for consideration for bariatric surgery. Please keep in mind that meeting these criteria does not guarantee that you will be referred for surgery; the decision to do so is based on an individual assessment of the risks and benefits of operation.

## What happens next?

At the end of the 12 sessions, the Tier 3 team will meet with you to assess your development and establish your long-term care.

## Contact us

If you require any additional information about the service, please telephone the service on **020 8725 1022** or email [\*\*SGH.Tier3@stgeorges.nhs.uk\*\*](mailto:SGH.Tier3@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

**For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit [www.stgeorges.nhs.uk](http://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk)**

## Additional services

### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough Wing (near the lift foyer).

**Tel:** 020 8725 2453 **Email:** [pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

### NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health. **Web:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones. **Tel:** 111

### AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website ([www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.



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