



Specialist Weight Management Service (SWMS)



Liverpool University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Specialist Weight Management
Service (SWMS)
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Is now the right time for me to lose weight?

Weight loss requires hard work. Many fad diets will promise quick and easy weight loss but the truth is that losing even a few pounds requires a good bit of effort and keeping it off can be even harder. However, like climbing a hill, if you are prepared and the conditions are right it is possible.

There are various reasons why people want to lose weight. Improving their health, feeling better within themselves, changing their appearance and reducing aches and pains are just some examples of this.

The evidence shows that dieting doesn't work and that it is a change in lifestyle that results in long term weight loss.

It is very common for people to confuse the desire to lose weight with actually being ready and prepared to change some aspects of their lifestyle.

Some people have lost weight in the past only to put it back on again. This can be very disheartening. Successful weight management requires commitment to long-term lifestyle changes and 'motivation' will have to hold up over time.

Commitment is about being aware that some of your habits or favourite activities will have to be changed e.g. having a take-away, snacking while watching TV, overeating during holidays and social events. Are you willing to stick with these changes?

Remember that we said that the desire to lose weight is not the same as being ready and prepared to make changes to aspects of your lifestyle? So it is important to ask yourself honestly – is now really the right time to make changes?

Sometimes the conditions for starting a weight loss programme are good and sometimes they are less good. The chances of making positive lifestyle changes that lead to weight loss are greater if conditions are right.

Sometimes our life can be stressful and other times it can be ok or even rosy! If we are going through major life stresses like moving house, worrying about a relative who is ill, relationship problems or coming to terms with a personal loss it may not be the best time to begin.

You may not have the energy or ability to remain focussed and you may decide to wait until these stresses pass rather than start 'on an empty tank'. For some people, however, starting a programme like this can be a positive step and can re-establish a sense of control and stability.

Consider if there may be any obstacles that might stand in your way such as:

- Will it be difficult finding time for myself that I can use to plan my goals and implement changes?
- Are there any things that might make it difficult or get in the way me being able to make changes?
- Will I struggle to attend appointments with SWMS regularly in order to get the help and support I need?
- Are there any benefits to not making changes?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes it doesn't mean that you won't be able to make lifestyle change, just that some time needs to be spent focussing on trying to find solutions to these possible obstacles.

Consider if you can try to change these things to improve the conditions for losing weight?
Who might support you in this?

Responsibility for change

The Specialist Weight Management Service will provide you with the opportunity to learn what you can do to change your dietary and activity habits to lose weight and, very importantly, to maintain the weight loss.

Attending a group programme gives you the chance to meet other people like yourself who are on a similar journey.

It provides a forum for you to receive support and encouragement from the other members, but also for you to give the same back.

It is very important to understand that just attending a group or seeing one of our therapists for advice does not automatically bring success.

The responsibility for achievement lies with you and not with health professionals or other members of a group.

The decision to attend the programme and whether or not it works for you is in your own hands.

You are responsible for your own success, so when things go well, it is down to your own hard work and you can feel good about yourself.

Deciding to start with SWMS

Is it more important to **you** to commit to losing weight now or to continue with the things you like about your current eating and drinking behaviour?

To help you answer this question, take a few minutes to think about the benefits and possible downsides of beginning a programme of change now and list them in the table on the next page.

Benefits of change 😊	Downsides of change ☹️

When your list is finished, go over it and give each benefit and downside a rating on a scale of 1–10 (Make sure you consider the importance of each benefit and downside to your overall health and quality of life):

- 10 = very important point
- 1 = slightly important point

Now add up your scores to see what is most important to you at this time.

How important is it to you to commit to losing weight now? Is it more important continuing with the things you like about your current eating and drinking behaviour?

It can be useful to explore each column starting with the ‘downsides’ of starting now and then look at ‘benefits’.

More often than not the ‘downsides’ are mainly short-term (“too busy, can’t drink as much, will miss my weekend take-away”, etc) whereas the benefits are both short-term (“will look better, fit into a wider range of clothes, feel better on holiday” etc) and long-term (“health benefits, improved self-esteem, less breathless” etc).

Look at the balance of benefits to downsides. If the list of downsides outweighs the benefits, this may not be the best time to start.

Deciding not to begin a programme for weight loss at a particular time is sometimes wise. However, if the balance leans in the direction of starting a programme now it may well help you tip the balance for change.

A person who starts a ‘diet’ and then fails can feel guilty, upset or frustrated. The decision to wait until later is sometimes a wise choice and may actually prevent a failure from occurring (At SWMS we do not try ‘dieting’).

Increasing your motivation for weight loss

If you don’t feel ready, willing and able to make a serious attempt to lose weight now think about the obstacles in your way;

- Is there anything you can do NOW to make it more likely you can commit?
- What support will you need?

- Where will you get this support?
- Think ahead. Will it become easier to commit to a weight-loss programme at some point in the near future when certain life stresses pass?

What if I'm not ready to make any changes?

It is ok if you decide that you are happy with your weight or that now is not a good time to make changes. If in the future your situation changes or you change your mind you can re-refer yourself to our Service when you are ready and more able to make changes.

Remember: If you cannot attend, please phone or email us. Not turning up to appointments means valuable time is wasted. It also impacts on waiting times for other patients and means you miss out on valuable support and information.

If you miss any of your appointments without letting us know that you cannot make it, you may be discharged from the programme.

Further information

If you would like more information about the Lose Weight Feel Great Specialist Weight Management Service, please contact:

Tel: 01942 483370

Email: swms.enquiries@aintree.nhs.uk



If you require a special edition of this leaflet

This leaflet is available in large print, Braille, on audio tape or disk and in other languages on request. Please contact:

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