

## NHS Low Calorie Diet (LCD) Programme Oviva FAQs

### What is the NHS Low Calorie Diet Programme?

The NHS is delivering a new programme which provides a low calorie diet treatment for people who are overweight and living with Type 2 diabetes. The programme is based on two large studies which showed that, as a result of this treatment, people living with Type 2 diabetes who were overweight could improve their diabetes control, reduce diabetes-related medication and even achieve remission (reduced blood glucose levels and no longer taking diabetes medication).

You will be offered total diet replacement products including soups and shakes consisting of up to 900 calories a day for up to 12 weeks. During this time you will be expected to replace all normal meals with these products. Alongside this, you will receive support for 12 months including help to re-introduce food after the initial 12 week period.

The programme will be delivered digitally with all appointments happening over phone/video calls, or via secure app messaging. This means you will not need to travel to a specific location for appointments, and you can have an appointment during evenings and weekends. You will be paired with your own personal Diabetes Specialist Dietitian who will support you for the entire 12 months. Your dietitian will provide expert one-to-one healthcare wherever you need it, with tailored support through every stage of the programme.

This support will provide you with the help and advice you need throughout every phase of the programme. You will also be closely supported by your local GP practice – for example if medicines need to be changed.

In your area the programme will be delivered digitally via an app or over phone or video calls by our trusted NHS provider, Oviva.

### Who is Oviva?

Oviva is a digital behaviour change company. Their team of specialist healthcare professionals combined with their unique digital tools support people with Type 2 diabetes to improve their health and better self-manage their condition.

### What is a Dietitian?

A Dietitian is a qualified healthcare professional who is regulated by the UK Health and Care Professionals Council and whose title is also protected by law. They hold either a four-year degree in dietetics, or a science degree followed by a two-year postgraduate qualification. A dietitian has supervised and assessed professional practice in clinical nutrition, medical nutrition therapy and food service management.

### What is remission from Type 2 diabetes?

Remission in people with Type 2 diabetes means that your blood sugar levels are no longer in the range for diabetes, without needing to take any diabetes medication. Some people are able to stop taking medication and put their Type 2 diabetes into remission. Research tells us that remission is most likely to be achievable closer to your diagnosis –

and is strongly linked to weight loss. Some people call this reversing Type 2 diabetes, but we prefer the term remission because your Type 2 diabetes can come back. There's no guarantee you will reach remission as the research so far suggests that it isn't possible for everyone. But there are so many benefits to joining the programme and losing extra weight.

### **What are the benefits of joining the programme?**

It is important to know that this programme doesn't guarantee your diabetes will go into remission. However, taking part can lead to other health benefits, such as:

- Reducing the number the medications you need to take
- Reducing your risk of heart disease and other diabetes related complications
- Lowering your blood pressure
- Improving your cholesterol
- Helping you to sleep better and generally feel more healthy

### **What are the side effects?**

It's important to have realistic expectations of the challenges you may face whilst on the programme, but they are normal and your Dietitian will provide guidance on how to prevent these side effects before they even happen:

- Feeling dehydrated or having a dry mouth.
- Dizziness and headaches in the first week or so.
- Fatigue.
- Constipation.
- Thinning of hair and dry skin can occur 3-6 months after weight loss. It is normally temporary.

Uncommon side effects:

- Diarrhoea and nausea.
- Menstrual changes in women.
- Gout and gallstones.

### **Why is the Low Calorie Diet (LCD) needed and what is Total Dietary Replacement (TDR)?**

The Low Calorie Diet is only needed in the first 12 weeks. It offers the highest chance of achieving significant weight loss over a short period and therefore putting your diabetes into remission. You will use a Total Diet Replacement (TDR) product, consisting of shakes and/or soups during this time which contain all the essential vitamins and minerals you need. Generally, you will have four meal replacement products per day. The Oviva team will provide information and support you in getting the TDR product.

### **Why do I have to have shakes for 12 weeks?**

Having the recommended shakes or soups as your Total Dietary Replacement products is a proven way to lose weight quickly and safely. At the moment, there is not enough evidence to support other approaches and a low calorie diet using meal replacements offers the greatest chances of achieving remission of Type 2 diabetes. Following the recommended plan is much easier than trying to calorie count standard meals and snacks, as often people

can find it difficult to stick to the strict limit. The shakes and soups are also nutritionally complete, meaning they contain all the nutrients, vitamins and minerals your body needs to work properly.

### **How much do the shakes cost?**

The whole programme, including the products, is funded by the NHS and completely free-of-charge to you.

### **What happens on the programme?**

This is a 12-month programme led by a team of Diabetes Specialist Dietitians and is split into 3 stages:

**Start:** An initial assessment followed by a consultation with your Diabetes Specialist Dietitian to explain the programme and set your personal goals. You will also be given your login details for the Oviva app and our online Learn portal.

**Change:** You will start your Low Calorie Diet whilst being supported by your Dietitian the whole way. This means you will consume recommended shakes or soups approximately 4 times a day instead of your usual meals. These products contain all the nutrients and minerals your body needs. You will then have 4 weeks of coaching to help you to slowly reintroduce food back into your diet in a healthy, sustainable way.

**Sustain:** For the remaining 8 months of the programme, you will work on sustaining these healthy habits with your Dietitian to maintain your weight and embed your new, healthy habits and behaviours in your lifestyle.

### **Where does the programme take place?**

The NHS Low Calorie Diet programme in your area is 100% remote, meaning you don't have to travel anywhere for your appointments. You can take part from the comfort of your own home through secure messaging in the Oviva app, or phone or video calls. This gives you flexibility to speak with your personal Specialist Diabetes Dietitian at a time and location suitable for you.

### **Will I be talking to a real person?**

Yes! Each patient is assigned a personal Specialist Diabetes Dietitian who will support them throughout the programme. Oviva's Specialist Diabetes Dietitians are available for booked appointments from 8am-8pm Monday to Friday, with weekend appointments available upon request. The times of the appointments are flexible to meet your needs.

### **What happens when I've been referred?**

Oviva's Patient Pathway Coordinator (PPC) aims to contact you within 5 working days of us receiving your referral. We will send you an email with a link to a survey to collect more information about you. If we do not receive your response in 3 working days, the PPC will attempt to contact you 3 times for enrolment. The final contact attempt is made as an email or letter which is sent to your address. This gives you at least 7 days to contact Oviva, it also

provides further information about the service. If we fail to get in touch with you will be discharged from the service and the referrer is informed via secure mail. Once you are enrolled on the programme you will be booked in for your nutritional and lifestyle consultation with your personal Dietitian which will be a 30 minute phone call or video call.

**Who can I contact at Oviva with any queries?**

Oviva's Patient Pathway Coordinators are available Monday to Friday 8am - 8pm and Saturday 9am-5pm to answer any queries and support you throughout your journey on the NHS Low Calorie Diet programme. Outside of these hours the team has an answer phone which is reviewed daily and you can expect a call back within 24 hours. Please contact the Patient Pathway Coordinator team on 02076224777.

