

The following information is about our non-surgical weight management program, that includes administration of Saxenda® medication, a natural gut hormone that works in the brain to decrease appetite and thereby reduce food intake, resulting in weight loss. The program may last anywhere between 5 weeks and 12 months, and involves two stages; losing weight and long-term maintenance.

Our non-surgical option is available to patients who fit the following criteria:-

1. Those who don't qualify for the surgical option because:
 - the risk for a general anaesthetic may be too high
 - their age prevents them from receiving adequate benefits after bariatric surgery
 - their BMI is lower than the accepted global criteria (which may result in them being underweight)
2. Those who are not 100% sure about surgery including those who first want to try another/ different non-surgical option. Or those who feel surgical intervention is too radical for them.
3. Those where the surgical option may be cost-prohibitive and still want to try an alternative program to lose weight
4. Those who may be outside the criteria for surgery at the hospital, or where their weight exceeds the maximum equipment capacity and can be supported with the non-surgical option until the parameters are met.
5. Those who do not fit the minimum age criteria and require support through non-surgical means until they reach an acceptable age for consideration of surgery.

Our non-surgical program involves:

- An initial consultation with our Bariatric Physician to explain about Saxenda® (Liraglutide), and how it works to help you lose weight and keep it off. This is the only registered medication for weight loss in New Zealand,
- Access to the Saxenda® online information website to get a full detailed information update, including how to start and dose Saxenda®, side effects and tips to manage them, injecting and storing the medication, preparing and administering Saxenda® and measuring success,
- The requirement for patients to inject themselves every day with Saxenda®, a pre-filled syringe pen similar to an insulin pen. Liraglutide (Saxenda®) is a natural hormone which our bodies already produce,
- Starting with a low dose and gradually increasing the dose to the recommended maximum dose and staying on that for the duration of the treatment,
- Setting realistic and attainable weight loss goals, with ongoing contact with the bariatric physician and integrated health team (nutrition and behavioural health/psychology) to assess and monitor progress and evaluate response,
- Introduction to a lifestyle program that will assist long-term success.

Things to be aware of:

- The side effects and adverse outcomes. These may include mild effects such as headaches and dehydration, nausea, abdominal cramping and diarrhoea, or more severe but rare effects such as pancreatitis
- Results will vary, and patients have a better chance of successful outcomes if Saxenda® is used in conjunction with both an exercise program and a balanced eating plan which follows the appropriate advice and guidelines provided

- An expectation that patients will achieve a 5% weight loss at 3 months to continue the Saxenda® program. (This is a Pharmac registration guideline)
- If further follow-up is required or requested with the members of the team (nutrition and behavioural health/psychology), these will be made available as a fee for service
- Saxenda® is a non-funded prescription medication and therefore can be costly. We suggest patients obtain this through The Chemist Warehouse as it is cheaper than standard pharmacies, however patients can still expect to pay on average \$480-550 per 1-2 months, depending on the dose being used.

We look forward to covering more about the non-surgical program when we see you for your consultation.