

Case study: James, 33



Context

Momenta Newcastle is delivering the NHS Low Calorie Diet (LCD) Programme across Birmingham and Solihull. The programme is delivered virtually over Zoom to groups of up to 15 people.

James' background and life before the programme

James lives with his family in Birmingham. He's been a security guard at Edgbaston Cricket Ground in Birmingham for the past six years while he's also been travelling around the country for work. Before this he worked as a door supervisor for a fast-food restaurant where access to convenience food was easy.

James was diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes in 2017. After a lengthy hospital admission due to septicaemia (blood poisoning by bacteria), he was prescribed Metformin and Gliclazide to help him control his blood sugar levels. At that time James wouldn't leave the house and felt demotivated. His eating habits were poor - he constantly ate but always felt hungry and had takeaways for all his meals.

In 2021, a nurse practitioner from his GP surgery referred James to the NHS Low Calorie Diet Programme as he was not tolerating his medications well. James weighed **177kg** and never thought he could lose weight. When he heard about the programme, it was a period in his life when he worried about his well-being and wanted to be healthy.

'I saw the programme as my last chance [to become healthy].'

James' journey

Phase 1 – Total Diet Replacement (TDR)

James started losing weight while on Phase 1 of the programme. When discussing the products, James mentions that he particularly enjoyed the chocolate orange shake, the golden syrup porridge and the sweet and sour noodles. Having some sweeter flavours helped him manage his sugar cravings, as he's always had a sweet tooth. For some variety, he also used spices and calorie-free products to enhance the flavours of the products.

'After the first month, I noticed that I was more alert.'

James found the first few months the most challenging as he had to get used to this new way of eating. He also experienced some bowel problems during that time that were later resolved. James continued losing weight as he got into a routine, and his mood improved.

Phase 2 - Rebalance

When it was time to reintroduce regular food into his diet, he found himself eating more vegetables, salads and other high-fibre foods. Over time he started feeling more energetic and bought a bike to cycle to and from work. He was also very active during his work shifts, completing approximately 30,000 steps on those days.

His group sessions were all virtual and, although James found the group setting intimidating at first, he soon established relationships with the other people on the programme. James appreciated the support he received from them as they were *'all in the same boat.'* He often found himself being inspired by other group members who were achieving their goals and overcoming significant challenges and barriers.



How did the programme fit into James' life?

*'I was taking **packed meals** to work.'*

As James was working both day and night shifts throughout the programme he found that planning was key! He used a daily planner to schedule his meals, which helped him eat a balanced diet and continue losing weight. He also decided to take a break from traveling for work so that he could focus on his health journey. After creating some healthy habits he found it easy to stick to them - even over the Christmas and Easter holidays. James's family was also very supportive at that time and kept junk food out of the house.

How has the programme improved James' health and life?

*'I'm **not on medications anymore.**'*

James lost **95kg (54% of his body weight)** since starting the NHS LCD programme and now weighs **82kg**. With anHb1Ac (average blood glucose) of **29**, his diabetes is in remission and his GP has advised him that he doesn't need any diabetes treatment. He feels happier, more confident in himself and his sleep quality has improved. Working has become much easier for James, and he continues to enjoy riding his bike - he's now planning long-distance bike rides! He can also go to theme parks and enjoy the rides - something he was previously told he could not do because of his weight.

Conclusion

James advises people to join the NHS Low Calorie Programme and see the benefits for themselves. He's also happy to share the things that helped him during his journey, like ordering a variety of product flavours to find the ones you enjoy most, clearing out cupboards, and avoiding the temptation of takeaways.

*'Keep a **clear focus** on your **goal** and be **determined**.'*



James at the end of the programme in Summer 2022. He's continued to lose weight and is now **13 stone (82kg)**.



NOTE: The Momenta LCD programme has 20 group sessions and one individual phone-call in three phases over 12 months, including an initial 12 weeks of Total Diet Replacement (TDR) products including shakes, soups, bars and pot meals. Referred participants must meet NHSE eligibility criteria and comply with medication adjustment advice given by their GP at referral.