

DiRECT (Diabetes REmission Clinical Trial) Study Feedback



A study has found that almost half of the patients with Type 2 diabetes supported by their GPs on a weight loss programme were able to reverse their diabetes in a year.

The first year results, which are published in *The Lancet*, also revealed that almost nine out of 10 people (86%) who lost 15kg or more put their Type 2 diabetes into remission.



Professor Roy Taylor

The study led by Professor Roy Taylor, from Newcastle University, and Professor Mike Lean from Glasgow University, found that 45.6% of those who were put on a low calorie diet for three to five months and were able to stop their Type 2 diabetes medications. Importantly, long-term support by routine General Practice staff was given to help the participants maintain their weight loss.

The trial, called DiRECT (Diabetes Remission Clinical Trial) and funded by Diabetes UK, recruited 298 people between the Newcastle and Glasgow University and builds on Professor Taylor's earlier pilot work. Professor Taylor, lead researcher of the DiRECT trial, said:

"These findings are very exciting. They could revolutionise the way Type 2 diabetes is treated.

"The study builds on the work into the underlying cause of the condition, so that we can target management effectively.

"Substantial weight loss results in reduced fat inside the liver and pancreas, allowing these organs to return to normal function.

"What we're seeing from DiRECT is that losing weight isn't just linked to better management of Type 2 diabetes: significant weight loss could actually result in lasting remission."

Remission was defined as having blood glucose levels (HbA1c) of less than 6.5% (48mmol/mol) at 12 months, with at least two months without any Type 2 diabetes medications.

Of the 298 people recruited to take part in DiRECT, half received standard diabetes care from their GP, whilst the other half received a structured weight management programme within primary care.

The programme included a low calorie, nutrient-complete diet for three to five months, food re-introduction and long-term support to maintain weight loss.

Type 2 diabetes remission was found to be closely related to weight loss. Over half (57%) of those who lost 10 to 15kg achieved remission, along with a third (34%) of those who lost five to 10kg. Only 4% of the control group achieved remission.

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