

# Fibromyalgia-Metabolic Health to Life Programme



Do you have fibromyalgia?  
Is your waistline more than half your height?  
Are you ready to improve your general health and feel better?

If yes, then join the Fibromyalgia-Metabolic Health to Life Programme.  
Very limited places. Starts 1st April 2022.

## The benefits

- Feel better, lose weight, clearer mind.
- Test your metabolic health, and be guided to the best lifestyle for you.
- Clarity on what to eat to improve metabolic health, personalised to your body's metabolic health and your preferences.

## About the programme

- This programme is only for people who have been diagnosed with Fibromyalgia.
- 10 places are available, for people that are ready and want to improve their health.
- The programme focuses on metabolic health (the inner health of your body), with targeted blood tests and measurements to understand your inner health.
- 8 online group sessions over 12 weeks. Led by nurse Tessa Barnard, health coach Vicky Sullivan, and GP Dr Campbell Murdoch. With resources and downloads.
- Covering Nutrition, Movement, Sleep, Mindset

**Starts Friday 1st April. With follow up sessions held on 8th, 22nd, 29th April, 13th, 27th May, 10th 24th June 2022.**

All sessions run online from noon to 1pm using Microsoft Teams.

## Next steps

- 1. Have an initial 10 minute appointment at your GP practice.**  
You'll be required to have the following:
  - Blood test. (Note: the blood test must be fasting. This means nothing to eat or drink except water for 8 hours before the blood test.)
  - Blood pressure reading.
  - Height and waist measurement.
- 2. Your GP will refer you to Dr Alison Sabine (rheumatologist) to make sure you are right for the programme.**
- 3. Start the programme.**

**If you have any further questions, please contact your GP.**

## Patient Story

### Hope on the Horizon

Richard Starling. Retired Baptist Minister. Married (wife Juliet happily does not have fibro). Enjoys photography, writing, reading, and gardening slowly.



2012



2022

Fibro invaded my life over an extended period. As I look back, I see “markers” of its progression. Eventually it meant I had to retire four years early in 2017, with restricted mobility and chronic pain. Retirement helped slow life down and stabilise my fibro, by reducing stress and work responsibility.

I was still far from well with high blood pressure and on multiple medications. Physical activity was difficult because of fibro, which didn't help my obesity. Eventually my blood sugar levels reached the NHS critical point, and the GP prescribed Metformin to control the condition. Being told I had become diabetic was not a huge surprise. I have been overweight for years and struggled to “diet” successfully. But why am I writing about type 2 diabetes as well as fibromyalgia? Because there may be unexpected hope.

In December 2020 my GP Surgery contacted me about joining a “pilot scheme” aiming to put diabetes into remission. Without much confidence, I agreed.

The pilot involved online group meetings, where we found out exactly how the body functions and processes food. This learning and support were absolutely central to me realising that the poor state of health I had found myself in had not been my fault. I learnt why the way I had been eating hadn't helped by health, and I learnt the changes that would be most likely to help.

I moved to a way of eating that reduced sugar, processed and total amount of carbohydrate. After

1 year I was 24kg lighter, all without having to fight hunger! Now I really enjoy what I eat, feeling lighter and better, I am happy to see that my blood sugar levels are back in the healthy range. I came off the diabetes medication after six months (under medical supervision), and my type 2 diabetes is in remission.

The BIG bonus: this dietary approach has also helped my fibro symptoms. Chronic pain is reduced, though not completely gone (with some supportive medications still). My “fibro fog” is less, and I feel more normal than in the last six years.

My fibro is not “cured” but at last I have hope. Fatigue and my poor tolerance of exercise have improved a bit- my walking is about 33% less painful. I can use an e-bike for moderate exercise. Most of us will have been told to “lose weight, exercise, and you'll feel better.” That is not necessarily the case! However, doing some physical activity and appropriate exercise is definitely beneficial for me. In addition, it has been liberating to understand the best food to eat to support by individual physiology and needs.

The improvement in health seen with these lifestyle changes is called better metabolic health. This has many wider health benefits, such as improving type 2 diabetes. I'm now interested to see the impact this approach has for other people with fibro.

At the very least we may be offered a way to take some control of our illness and live well.

***Richard Starling***