

St John HealthPartners
Frequently asked questions regarding Weight Loss Surgery

What is Weight Loss Surgery?

Weight loss surgery, often called Bariatric Surgery, is a procedure designed to assist obese individuals achieve significant weight loss.

There are two types of surgery for obesity:

Malabsorptive- shortens the digestive tract

Restrictive- reduces how much food the stomach can hold

Procedure	Type of Procedure	Side Effects May include	Possible Complications
<u>Gastric Bypass</u> Most frequently performed weight loss procedure	Restrictive with some Malabsorption Stomach is divided to form a new, smaller pouch. Patients will feel full after eating only a small portion of food	Nausea and Vomiting Potential Food intolerances Constipation Potential Anemia (vitamin supplement a must)	Leaks Bleeding Blood Clots Pneumonia Hernia Bowel Obstruction Stricture Anemia Infection
<u>Lab-Band</u> Usually done laparoscopically	Restrictive A silicone band is fastened around the upper stomach creating a new, smaller pouch. Limits the food intake. Is the only adjustable procedure.	Nausea and Vomiting Gastroesophageal Reflux (regurgitation)	Band Slippage Stomach-Band outlet blockage Poor Esophageal function Constipation, diarrhea Difficulty swallowing Band Erosion
<u>Duodenal Switch</u> Achieves and maintains the best reported long term percentage of excess weight loss	Restrictive and Malabsorption elements Partial gastrectomy which reduces the stomach while maintaining its normal function	Chronic diarrhea	Severe malnutrition risk – may require surgical revision

Sleeve Gastrectomy	Restrictive Stomach is stapled and divided vertically with more than 85% of it removed	Possible leak that may require surgery Bleeding Blood Clots Pneumonia Infection	
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How would I know if I qualify for Surgery?

Weight Loss surgery is an option for people who are severely over weight and cannot lose the weight using traditional methods or if you suffer from serious obese- related health conditions. You may be a candidate for surgery if you have:

- A body mass index (BMI) of 40 or more (100 lbs overweight)
- A BMI between 35 – 39.9 if you suffer from type 2 Diabetes, heart disease or sleep apnea

What do I need to consider prior to Weight Loss Surgery?

In addition to the above criteria:

- You must be willing to make long term behavioral changes
- Be determined to make weight loss and improved health a priority
- Be committed to long-term medical follow-up

Health Benefits of Weight Loss Surgery

When a significant reduction in weight loss occurs, the health benefits are remarkable:

- Type 2 diabetes is cured in 80% of diabetic patients
- High blood pressure (hypertension) is cured in about 50% of patients
- Cholesterol levels and other heart risk factors also typically improve
- Sleep apnea is cured in 75% of patients
- Shortness of breath is significantly improved in about 75-80% of patients
- Severity of asthma attacks are reduced
- Low back pain and arthritis is typically relieved after surgery
- Heartburn can be relieved
- Urinary incontinence is in general relieved
- Venous problems in the legs can be reduced

What will happen to my skin after Weight Loss Surgery?

Depending upon your weight loss, you may experience sagging skin. Sagging skin can be minimized through proper diet and exercise. When that is not enough, some people may opt for cosmetic procedures.

What can I expect after surgery?

A lot!! Depending upon your choice of surgery, your hospital stay may be from 2-5 days and you could return to work within 2-6 weeks. You will be provided with a packet that list of foods that you will need to avoid while your body is healing and which exercises can best assist you with your weight loss goals. A dietitian and physical therapist may be available to assist you with your food and exercise plans.

Will my insurance cover the cost of my Weight Loss Surgery?

Medical insurance coverage varies by state and insurance provider. Several states have passed legislation requiring insurers to offer weight loss surgery for patients.

For plans that cover weight loss surgery, the medical records must contain specific patient information including a measurement of the BMI, diagnosis indicating medical necessity, history of participation in a weight loss program and have received a psychological evaluation.

Please contact your insurance company for specific details of your coverage.