

Weight Loss Surgery: Is it right for you?

A shared decision making program from the Foundation for Informed Medical Decision Making and Health Dialog.

This program is for patients who:

- Have a body mass index (BMI)* of 40 or more; or
- Have a BMI of 35 or more as well as other weight-related health problems such as diabetes, high blood pressure, problems breathing during sleep, or arthritis.

This program is not intended for:

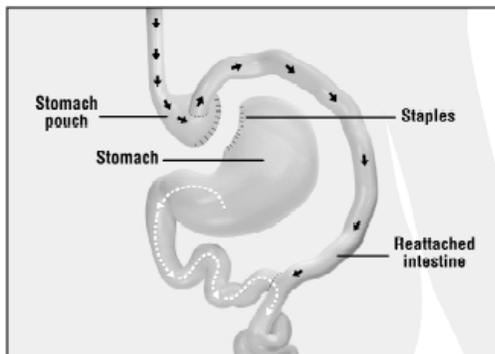
- Women who are pregnant, breast-feeding, or may become pregnant
- People who have other health conditions that make weight loss surgery too risky.

Summary:

There are many lifestyle changes necessary for weight loss, regardless of whether a person has weight loss surgery, and many ways that life can change after having weight loss surgery. There are also several different types of weight loss surgery. Therefore there are many factors to consider when making a decision about weight loss surgery.

Types of Surgery:

Gastric Bypass



After gastric bypass surgery, the food goes from the esophagus into a small stomach pouch, and then to the reattached intestine (black arrows). However, it bypasses most of the stomach and what is normally the top portion of the intestine. Gastric juices made by the unused portion of the stomach still flow into the intestine (white arrows).

Other Types:

- *Biliopacreatic diversion*: a modified gastric bypass that allows for consumption of larger portions than traditional gastric bypass; associated with nutritional deficiencies and loose bowel movements
- *Sleeve or vertical gastrectomy*: a less technically difficult procedure that still promotes some weight loss; sometimes used as a first step for high risk patients to begin the weight loss process. Preliminary studies suggest it is another effective procedure for weight loss, but it is not a proven method yet.

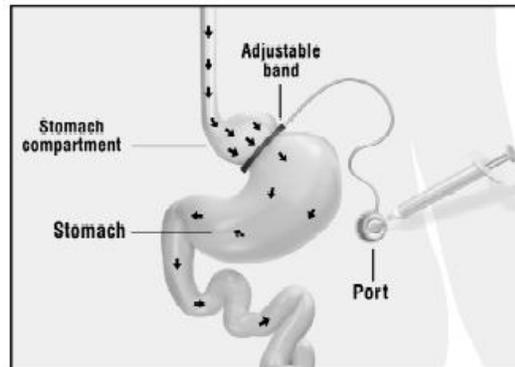
After Surgery:

Lifestyle Changes:

After surgery, a person must:

- Eat smaller meal portions
- Learn to choose the most nutritious foods, and
- Be more active

Gastric Banding



After gastric banding, food (black arrows) continues to flow through the same path it always did, but flow through the stomach is slower.

Weight Loss After Surgery

How much weight lost after surgery depends on:

- Weight before surgery
- Type of surgery
- Eating and exercise habits

Weight Loss after bypass versus banding

| | Gastric Bypass | Gastric Banding |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Average Weight Loss (in pounds) | 103 | 71 |
| Range of Weight Loss (in pounds) | 46-138 | 29-100 |

Improvement in Weight Related Conditions:

Diabetes, osteoarthritis, high blood pressure, and sleep apnea typically improve or completely resolve with weight loss. Additionally, studies suggest that people who have weight loss surgery live longer than those with severe obesity who do not have weight loss surgery.

Risks and Complications

| | Gastric Bypass | Gastric Banding |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Risk of death within 30 days | 1 in 100 | 1 in 100 |
| Risk of minor complications within 30 days | 20 in 100 | 13 in 100 |

The chance of death after either gastric bypass or gastric banding may be higher for men, people older than 65, and people who are very heavy. Complications after either procedure are often not medically serious and will get better on their own, or with simple treatment.

Serious Complications

| | Gastric Bypass | Gastric Banding |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Blockage in the digestive system | 5 in 100 | <1 in 100 |
| Bleeding | 2 in 100 | 2 in 100 |
| Leaks in the digestive system | 2 in 100 | 2 in 100 |
| Blood clots | 2 in 100 | 2 in 100 |
| Internal hernias | 2 in 100 | -- |
| Follow up surgery to correct the procedure | 2 in 100 | 8 in 100 |

Other Choices:

- Calorie reduction
- Healthier food choices
- Exercise
- Counseling
- Medicines