



## WEIGHT LOSS SURGERY FOR THE SEVERELY OBESE

Weight loss surgery, also known as bariatric surgery, is now a common solution for the obesity epidemic. The procedure is not recommended for everyone who is overweight or obese. However, it may be an option if you are obese and have not been able to lose weight with other methods.

### AM I A CANDIDATE FOR BARIATRIC SURGERY?

Weight loss surgery is recommended ONLY for people with one of the following:

- Severe obesity (body mass index above 40) who have not responded to diet, exercise, or weight loss medicines
- Body mass index between 35 and 40, along with a serious medical problem (including diabetes, severe joint pain, or sleep apnea) that would improve with weight loss

### DOES BARIATRIC SURGERY REALLY WORK?

As more people are having weight loss surgery than ever before, medical researchers have begun to report favorable study results on its safety and weight loss potential. People who have bariatric surgery can lose dramatic amounts of weight, and keep it off for as long as 10 years after surgery.

### ARE ALL BARIATRIC SURGERIES THE SAME?

There are several types of weight loss surgery, categorized by two basic approaches. The procedure either:

- Restricts how much food your stomach can hold at any time
- Prevents your digestive system from absorbing all the nutrition in the food you eat, or
- Combines both these methods

If you are a candidate for bariatric surgery, some of the options your physician may recommend include **gastric banding**, which uses an inflatable band to squeeze the stomach into two sections; a **sleeve gastrectomy**, which is usually done with a laparoscope to remove about 75% of the stomach; or a **gastric bypass**, the most common type of weight loss surgery, which combines both restrictive and malabsorptive approaches.

You should speak to your physician about the potential risks and benefits of weight loss surgery, because it also requires lifelong changes in how you eat to reach and maintain a healthier weight after the procedure. But if you are severely obese, it could be just the answer for you.

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