

Weight Loss Surgery

What is weight loss surgery?

Weight loss surgery (also called bariatric surgery) includes several different procedures designed to make the stomach smaller. The two most common procedures are gastric banding and Roux-en-Y (ROO-en-Y) bypass. The goal of these surgeries is for you to feel satisfied with less food, so you eat less and lose weight.

What is gastric banding?

A silicone band is placed around the upper part of the stomach. Your doctor can adjust the band after the surgery to control weight loss.

What is Roux-en-Y?

A small pouch is created in the stomach that “skips” some of the small intestine. After this surgery the body absorbs less calories from food, which leads to weight loss.

Who can have weight loss surgery?

People with a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or higher, or people with a BMI of 35 who have at least one weight-related medical problem, are usually eligible for weight loss surgery if they have not been able to lose weight in other ways.

Will I be able to eat normal foods after the surgery?

There are strict food recommendations that need to be followed after weight loss surgery. You will never be able to eat the way you used to, but you also will not be as hungry as you used to be.

Will my insurance pay for weight loss surgery?

Many insurance plans cover weight loss surgery. Check with your insurance provider for details about your plan.

Where can I get more information?

Your doctor

National Institutes of Health

Web sites: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/weightlossurgery.html> and <http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/gastric.htm>

Obesity Action Coalition

Web site: <http://www.obesityaction.org>

American College of Surgeons Bariatric Surgery Center Network

Web site: <http://www.acsbscn.org>

American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery

Web site: <http://asmbs.org>

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This handout is provided to you by your family doctor and the American Academy of Family Physicians. Other health-related information is available from the AAFP online at <http://familydoctor.org>.

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