

Obesity surgery operations –guidance for patients

Making the decision to have surgery is a huge step. Once committed to surgery, there are different types of surgery to consider. Listed below are some points that may be helpful.

Type of operation	Adjustable gastric band	Roux en y gastric bypass
Description	An adjustable band is placed around the top of the stomach, creating a small pouch (15-30 ml.)	A small pouch is created at the top of the stomach and attached to a limb of the small intestine.
Method of weight loss	The band is inflated 6 to 8 weeks after surgery. Inflating the band restricts the passage of food from the small pouch to the rest of the stomach. This makes you feel fuller more quickly. Food will be then absorbed in the normal way. You may have to return for future band inflations. The band may also be deflated.	The small stomach pouch (15-30 ml) encourages you to feel full and you will not be able to eat as much. Not as much of your food will be absorbed.
Effect on diet	Initially, you will have to stay on a liquid diet or very small portions of pureed/liquidised diet. After the band is inflated smaller amounts of food in one sitting can be eaten.	Initially, you will only be able to eat very small amounts of very soft food. With time, the portion sizes will increase. A meal will be a tea plate size portion.
Rate of weight loss	Expected rate is 0.5 to 1.0 kg/week (1-2 pounds per week.)	Initial rate may be over 2kg/week (4 pounds per week) however after the first couple of months, it will begin to decrease. Eventually, it will be 0.5 to 1.0 kg per week (1 to 2 pounds per week.)
Potential problems	Softer, high calorie foods such as biscuits, chocolate and crisps are easy to eat and will lead to weight gain. It may be more difficult to tolerate certain foods such as bread and meat. It is possible to stretch the pouch or oesophagus.	It can be difficult to eat a balanced diet as initially you may have difficulty eating certain foods. This may result in snacking of softer, higher calorie food. May experience dumping syndrome after eating sweet food (light-headiness, diarrhoea.) Weight gain is possible in the longer term.
Need for vitamin supplements?	In the long term, providing a balanced diet is followed, there should be no need for supplements. However this advice will vary between centres with some recommending multivitamins and mineral supplementation for life. It is advisable to contact the centre.	Initially food intake is very low and multivitamin and mineral supplements are needed. In addition, the absorption of calcium and iron may be affected. Long-term supplementation is recommended. The absorption of B12 is affected and many centres recommend Vitamin B12 injections. It is advisable to contact the centre.

The surgeon will be willing to discuss the options that are open to you and the expected results. You may also be offered the opportunity to meet the dietitian before making your decision. Web sites that are useful include:

www.bospa.org

www.WLSinfo.co.uk

www.nice.org.uk/CG43 Obesity: the prevention, identification, assessment and management of overweight and obesity in adults and children

If possible, attend a local support group and speak to individuals who have had the surgery.