

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT BARIATRIC AND METABOLIC SURGERY

What you need to know before making a decision

Will I
become
skinny after
the surgery?

Is it a
Cosmetic
Surgery?

It is for people who
are obese, and
not for me

Will I
regain weight
after the
surgery?

Will I have a
big scar after
the surgery?



ITS AN EASY FIX

You will lose weight quickly after bariatric surgery, but surgery is only one component of a multipronged treatment for obesity. Bariatric surgery is an "aid" or "catalyst" for achieving weight loss. But it requires a life-long commitment towards lifestyle changes. The end goal of bariatric surgery is to help patients develop healthier habits and lifestyle changes over the long haul.



BARIATRIC SURGERY IS ALL COSMETIC

Bariatric surgery is not a cosmetic procedure. While losing weight can dramatically change and enhance your appearance, the real benefits of obesity surgery are health and longevity. Obesity is linked to more than 20 chronic health conditions, including cancer risk and weight loss helps you to minimise the impact on almost all of them.



BARIATRIC SURGERY IS ONLY FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE HUNDREDS OF KILOGRAMS TO LOSE

Most people think that weight loss surgery is only for people who are very severely obese and not for them. In fact, the people who benefit the most from surgery are not only obese, but they also have other associated medical conditions that can impact their health and affect their quality of life. So, if you have a BMI of 32.5 or more and are taking medications for type 2 diabetes, raised cholesterol, raised blood pressure, have sleep apnoea, or are having chronic low back pain/knee joint pain, infertility, fatty liver etc., you are probably a candidate for bariatric surgery.



IT IS DANGEROUS AND LIFE-THREATENING SURGERY

The risk of death from bariatric surgery is lower than for people with severe obesity who don't have the surgery. Today, the risk of death from bariatric surgery is considered equivalent if not lower than other surgeries, such as gallbladder surgeries or hip replacements. In fact, bariatric surgery can also significantly reduce the risk of death from other causes such as heart disease, diabetes, cancer and many more. Overall the benefits of undergoing bariatric surgery in severe obesity far outweighs the risk from having bariatric surgery.





IT IS NOT COVERED BY INSURANCE

Some insurance companies do cover bariatric surgery if medical needs demand it, but the coverage varies by state and companies. It is important that you check your policy wording to confirm or have a discussion with your policy agent/company.



IT CAUSES VITAMIN DEFICIENCIES

Bariatric procedures especially the bypass surgeries can reduce nutrient absorption, but you can avoid this easily by eating a balanced diet and taking vitamin supplements.



MOST PEOPLE REGAIN THE WEIGHT

Most people who have bariatric surgery keep majority of the weight off over the long-term. Only a small proportion of patients will regain weight if they follow unhealthy lifestyle and do not follow medical advice.



ALL WEIGHT LOSS SURGERIES ARE THE SAME

There are multiple different types of bariatric and metabolic surgeries. The common procedures like the sleeve gastrectomy, Roux-Y gastric bypass, One-Anastomosis gastric bypass, BPD-DS and SADI-S and many more. Every operation has a slightly different result profile when it comes to excess weight loss, resolution/remission of comorbidities etc. Your surgeon will advise you the best suitable alternatives after taking into consideration your weight, BMI and the medical comorbidities that you have and lastly your choice.



IT LEAVES A BIG SCAR

Over the past decade, surgeons have refined their techniques, and most bariatric surgeries are performed laparoscopically through tiny incisions or cuts. Hence you have much lesser pain, better cosmesis, early recovery, shorter hospital stays and early return to work.



I WILL HAVE A VERY LONG HOSPITAL ADMISSION

With advent of laparoscopy, anaesthesia protocols and early recovery after surgery (ERAS) guidelines your hospital stay is few days only. This may only vary occasionally based upon your medical comorbidities rather than the surgery itself.



PEOPLE BECOME VERY SKINNY OR THIN AFTER BARIATRIC SURGERY

Bariatric surgery targets your excess body weight and is not intended to affect your ideal body weight. Depending upon the surgery you are advised or you choose, on average you will lose 50-85% of your excess body weight. So, the surgery is intended to under correct you rather than overcorrect.



YOU WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO EAT NORMAL FOOD

Post surgery for a few weeks you are advised to follow a specific diet plan where you progress slowly through liquids, pureed and the soft diet to normal diet. Although the portion sizes that you can eat gets small, you will be able to eat most normal foods. It is important though that you stick to your dietician advice and incorporate healthy eating choices and diet so as to get the best long-term results and avoid nutritional deficiencies.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, bariatric or metabolic surgery has become a major intervention in the treatment of obesity and associated metabolic diseases, such as hyperlipidaemia, diabetes, and hypertension etc. It results in significant and long-lasting weight loss, improved metabolic activities, and overall health.



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