



# BARIATRIC SURGERY FAQ

## **What are the bariatric surgery procedures offered?**

We offer all the surgical options and the commonly performed bariatric surgery procedures performed are gastric bypass, sleeve gastrectomy, adjustable gastric band, and biliopancreatic diversion with duodenal switch.

Each surgery has its own advantages and disadvantages. Please see our online seminar at [www.nygetfit.com](http://www.nygetfit.com) for more information

## **Who is a candidate for bariatric surgery?**

- BMI  $\geq$  40
- BMI  $\geq$ 35 and at least one or more obesity-related co-morbidities such as type II diabetes (T2DM), hypertension, sleep apnea, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, osteoarthritis, lipid abnormalities, or heart disease.

## **How do I calculate my BMI?**

Divide your weight in kilograms (kg) by your height in meters (m) then divide the answer by your height again to get your BMI.

## **How do I determine if I am overweight? What are the BMI references?**

- Underweight =  $<$ 18.5
- Normal weight = 18.5–24.9
- Overweight = 25–29.9
- Obesity = BMI of 30 or greater

## **What if I am not interested in surgery, but still want to lose weight?**

We offer two options if you are not interested in surgery, weight loss medication and the IntraGastric Balloon system.

## **What is the Obalon Balloon system?**

The Obalon Balloon system is a non-surgical treatment that helps in weight loss when combined with diet and exercise. The balloons stay for six months and are coupled with a professionally supervised nutrition and exercise program.

## **Will I benefit from weight-loss medication?**

Health care professionals often use BMI to decide who might benefit from weight loss medication. Your doctor may prescribe a medication to treat your weight if you are an adult with:

- A BMI of 30 or more or
- A BMI of 27 or more and you have a weight-related health problem.

### **Will my insurance company pay for bariatric surgery?**

Most insurances cover weight loss surgeries and we advise all patients to contact their insurance carrier prior to their initial appt to confirm bariatric and nutritional benefits.

### **What are the insurance requirements for surgery?**

Requirements for bariatric surgery vary depending on your insurance carrier. Some insurance companies require between two and six months of nutritional counseling prior to surgery.

ALL insurances require a letter of medical necessity from their PCP doctor, Cardiology, Pulmonary, Psych, GI-EGD and nutritional counseling. Depending on medical conditions, some require Neurology, Endocrine, Vascular and/or Hematology.

### **Will I have to follow a diet prior to surgery?**

Yes. Most bariatric patients are on a special diet pre-operatively. The reason for this is to shrink the liver and reduce fat in the abdominal area. This helps make the surgery easier and safer.

### **How long after bariatric surgery will I have to be out from work?**

- Most patients can return to work in one or two weeks.
- Patients who lift >10lbs can return to work in 6 weeks.

### **How long after bariatric surgery can I start exercising?**

- Immediately after surgery you can start walking, even while you are in the hospital.
- Build slowly over several weeks. Avoid lifting > 10lbs for the first four weeks.

### **How long after bariatric surgery can I go in the pool/ocean?**

As soon as your incisions are closed, normally after 2 weeks patients can return to swim/water aerobics.

### **How long after bariatric surgery can I get pregnant?**

It is advised patients wait 12-18 months after surgery before getting pregnant. Birth control pills, having an IUD or using condoms after surgery is needed.

### **Will I lose my hair after bariatric surgery?**

Hair loss is common between 3 and 9 months following surgery. Hair loss is almost always temporary. Adequate intake of protein, vitamins and minerals will help ensure hair re-growth.

### **How long after surgery do I have to take vitamins?**

You will need to take a multivitamin for life. You may need additional vitamins especially Iron, Calcium Citrate and B complex.

### **Can I go off my medication after surgery?**

As patients lost weight, they may be able to reduce their dosage or discontinue the need for high blood pressure, heart disease, arthritis, cholesterol or diabetes medication.

### **Does insurance pay for skin removal surgery?**

Most insurance companies recommend waiting at least 16 months for evaluation of plastic surgery. Plastic surgery for removal of excess abdominal and breast skin is often covered by insurance for medical purposes, i.e. moisture, hygiene and rashes.

### **What if I regained weight after bariatric surgery?**

If you regained weight after bariatric surgery, don't stress, there is always options.

First your surgeon will want to evaluate you by determining the cause of your weight gain through a blood-test, radiology imaging and nutritional counseling.

Your surgeon will want to check your stomach pouch size and opening between your stomach and your small intestine; If either is too large, or has stretched, this may be the cause of your post op weight gain. This is done by an esophogram also called an "Upper GI Swallow study". You will drink a special colored dye while taking an x-ray in order to see your digestive track in motion.

### **What is revisional surgery?**

Revision weight loss surgery is a surgical procedure that is performed on patients who have already undergone a form of bariatric surgery.

### **Do you perform revision surgery after the sleeve and bypass operations?**

Yes. After the sleeve operation, the volume of the stomach can double. As the stomach expands, some patients begin to eat more. This group of patients may benefit from a revision. Options include conversion to a bypass, conversion to a duodenal switch or re-sleeving.

The endoscopic overstitch procedure is a new and innovative revision procedure for individuals who have had Roux-en-Y gastric bypass surgery and have regained weight due to a stretched stomach pouch or enlarged stomach outlet.

The Endoscopic Overstitch reduces the stomach pouch and the stomach outlet (stoma) to the original gastric bypass size without traditional surgery or incisions with minimal recovery time.

### **Am I a candidate for revisional surgery?**

Revision weight loss surgery is a surgical option for patients who have either had complications from such surgery or have not successfully achieved significant weight loss results from the initial surgery. This can vary from patient to patient.