**Bariatric surgery**

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Date

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Obesity has recently become a rising topic of discussion among health professionals. This increase has led to health concerns leading to the popularity of bariatric surgery. Bariatric surgery is a term used to describe weight loss procedures such as gastric bypass, sleeve gastrectomy, gastric banding, and gastric balloon. These procedures depend on factors such as the amount of weight one needs to lose and the overall health condition. Bariatric surgery procedures help by altering a person’s digestive tract limiting the amount of food intake, altering hunger hormones, and suppressing one’s appetite. According to (Bettini et al., 2020), bariatric surgery is today's most effective therapy for long-term weight reduction for people with severe obesity. Patients undergoing bariatric surgery undergo major lifestyle changes pre-surgery and post-surgery and in some instances, some complications. This article will discuss the different bariatric procedures and the benefits and challenges of each bariatric surgery type. Bariatric surgery is a safe procedure which has provided obese people with a way to have control over their weight.

Over the years, bariatric surgery has become a common procedure for treating obesity, and improvements have been made to suit the needs of the patients. The number of patients receiving bariatric surgery has increased over the years. This surgery involves different types of procedures depending on what a patient needs to achieve. Each procedure involves prescreening, such as nutrition assessment and Body Mass Index (BMI) check to determine the expected change after the surgery. There are different types of bariatric surgery which depend on the patient’s health condition, affordability, and lifestyle.

Sleeve gastrectomy is one of the weight loss procedures involving the reduction of the size of one’s stomach. According to Alalwan et al. (2021), sleeve gastrectomy is the most performed procedure compared to the other bariatric surgery procedures. This procedure is minimally invasive; it is performed laparoscopically, by inserting small instruments through small incisions made on the upper stomach, shrinking the stomach to a banana-sized tube. The reduction in stomach size reduces the amount of food intake. Additionally, the surgery alters hunger hormones assisting with weight loss as well as reliving conditions associated with obesity.

Patients whose BMI is 40 and above are considered extremely obese and they qualify for this procedure. Also, people whose BMI is between 30-39 and who have serious health conditions such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, cancer, stroke, and infertility need this procedure. However, while this procedure reduces the stomach size, one must be willing to make major lifestyle changes and have regular follow-ups. Just like every other surgical procedure, sleeve gastrectomy has a few risks, which can be either long-term or short-term. Some short-term risks are severe reactions to anesthesia, blood clots, bleeding from the cut edge of the stomach, or breathing problems. Long-term risks are vomiting, hernias, malnutrition, and low blood sugar. Nonetheless, with proper medical follow up, the procedure is highly effective.

Sleeve gastrectomy has the advantage of being a minimally invasive procedure since it is done by making small incisions on the upper stomach. This procedure is also preferred as it can be performed on patients with risky health conditions. In addition, the procedure is very effective in relieving obesity-related health complications. A sleeve gastrectomy, however, is a non-reversible procedure that can cause complications such as heartburn and acid reflux. According to (Yeung et al., 2020), sleeve gastrectomy exposes patients to severe acid reflux. Also, it has less impact on the metabolism compared to gastric bypass.

Gastric bypass another type of bariatric surgery that aims at reducing the number of calories one can absorb and the amount of food one can take. The procedure is invasive, and according to Arterburn et al. (2020), the bypass procedure is one of the most successful bariatric surgery and has a good impact on weight loss. This procedure is performed by first making an egg-sized pouch from the larger stomach. The small pouch is attached to the small intestines bypassing the larger stomach. The larger stomach no longer stores or digests any food. A gastric bypass reduces the stomach size, which helps reduce the amount of food intake, hence, less calories absorbed. Also, it has an impact on an individual’s metabolism and hormones, which helps in controlling obese related complications such as diabetes.

Gastric bypass helps patients with heartburn issues and it is also a reliable weight loss procedure. Just like sleeve gastrectomy, gastric bypass is performed on patients with a BMI of above 40 and patients with severe health conditions such as heart disease, stroke, or cancer and a BMI of between 30-39. This procedure, however, is more invasive compared to other procedures. Additionally, the procedure exposes a patient to the risk of developing ulcers and risks of small bowel obstruction.

Alternatively, physicians can opt for gastric banding a minimally invasive procedure that involves placing a silicon band on the top part of one’s stomach. A tube accessible through a port under the skin of the abdomen is attached to the band; through this port, the surgeon injects saline water into the band to inflate it. The small stomach pouch formed at the top reduces the amount of food a patient takes as one is full from having small food portions. This procedure is less invasive and effective in weight reduction.

Gastric banding, like any other bariatric surgery, is recommended for people with a BMI of above 30 and with serious health conditions caused by their obese nature. The procedure has a faster recovery period and there are fewer chances of hernias. Also, it reduces the risk of hypertension, diabetes, and other diseases related to obesity. A patient who undergoes this type of surgery has the option to adjust the band by either tightening or loosening it or adjusting the size of the stomach.

Nonetheless, this procedure has slower weight loss results compared to other procedures, and the silicon band may erode into the stomach requiring removal. In addition, one can easily develop ulcers, heartburn, or inflammation in the stomach lining. Individuals who undergo gastric banding need to carefully follow a routine recommended to them by their healthcare provider to avoid complications such as vomiting.

Under certain circumstances, a patient may prefer a less invasive procedure such as the gastric balloon. The gastric balloon is a type of bariatric surgery involving the insertion of a deflated balloon into the stomach using an endoscope. Once the balloon is well positioned, it is inflated resulting to a reduction in the size of the stomach. The procedure is a temporary non-invasive procedure. The balloon is removed after six months. The gastric balloon is affordable and it is flexible since the balloon can be removed at any time. However, the procedure can cause vomiting, constipation, temporary abdominal pain, or acid reflux. This procedure has slow results; however, it has provided patients with a non-surgical option for weight loss.

Bariatric surgery had provided obese people with a solution to their weight problem by offering different ways of controlling their food intake. As the saying goes “we are what we eat” and sometimes we are unable to control what we take not because we do not want to but because out body wants more. Weight-loss surgery has been there over the years, and it has helped people who have a hard time controlling their food intake. In some instance, we find people who are obese because of their family genes while others are just obese because of their lifestyle. Regardless, they all need help in reducing their weight to avoid the risks of having heart disease or even diabetes. I think bariatric surgery has come in handy for these people because it offers a way out for them. Some may ask, why not go to the gym? Well, obese people have way too much weight and health problems to keep up with the gym life. Also, some have an uncontrolled appetite which causes them to eat excessively.

I would consider having one of the bariatric procedures if am struggling with weight loss. This consideration is because I would rather have a procedure to help me reduce weight than live life fearing the risk of having heart disease, kidney problems, or diabetes. However, I would go for a less invasive procedure such as the sleeve gastrectomy. When done carefully and by a professional it gives excellent result. All these procedures have their fair share of risks but being obese is riskier.

Bariatric surgery has come a long way in addressing the high number of obesity cases and the health complications associated with being obese. While some of these procedures are invasive such as gastric bypass, they provide a solution to individuals struggling with weight loss. However, individuals should understand that one does not magically lose weight immediately after the procedure. After the surgery, the healthcare provider will give a recommended diet that one should follow to lose the desired weight. The patient must ensure they keep following the instructions given to avoid complications and achieve the intended results. The right procedure usually depends on the doctor's exam of the patient. Healthcare providers will select the best procedure for an individual depending on their health condition, the desired end goal, and in some cases the cost associated with the procedure. Bariatric surgery has long-term results for weight loss, however, one must be ready for the lifestyle change that is associated with the procedures.

**References**

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