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Understanding Gastric Bypass Surgery: Learn The Risks & Benefits of This Extreme Weight Loss Procedure

Topics Covered:

What Is Gastric Bypass?

The Science Behind Gastric Bypass

Laparoscopic Surgery

Understanding the Gastric Bypass Procedure

Should I Consider Gastric Bypass?

What Should I Expect From Gastric Bypass Surgery?

Gastric Bypass Risks

Is My Health In Need Of Gastric Bypass?

Who Should Not Have Gastric Bypass?

Life After Gastric Bypass

Understanding Gastric Bypass Surgery: Learn The Risks & Benefits of This Extreme Weight Loss Procedure

What Is Gastric Bypass?

Gastric bypass is likely to be something that you have heard quite a bit about. There are countless people, including celebrities that are swearing by this method of weight loss. Yet, before you determine it is the right way for you to lose the weight, take into account the good and the bad that comes with it. Although gastric bypass is a successful method of weight loss, it is strictly used to treat those that are considered morbidly obese.

Because there are serious risks of having this type of surgery, gastric bypass is used only when the risks of surgery are lessened by the risks of health that the individual is currently facing.

If you are interested in this type of surgery for weight loss, you will likely need to have health conditions that are being caused or worsened by your weight. For example, conditions in which diabetes has worsened or blood pressure are much too high. By losing the weight that the body is carrying, through gastric bypass or not, you are better capable of reversing or slowing the progress of health conditions such as these.

Life Savings

Gastric bypass is more about saving your life than improving the way that you look. Many people find that weight loss in any form is very challenging and offers little instant reward. It is hard to lose just a few pounds, not to mention the amount that most individuals considering gastric bypass are in need of losing. With this method of weight loss, the body actually loses weight quickly, simply because you can not eat as much as you used to be able to.

To give you these health benefits, gastric bypass effectively cuts the stomach in half. By dividing the stomach into two sections, the smaller of which is at the top, the individual feels fuller faster, can only eat small amounts. The stomach is significantly smaller, making a person only capable of eating very small portions of food. Most of those that are using gastric bypass will eat more meals more often but they will be incredibly smaller.

With the help of gastric bypass surgery, a term that is used to describe several different types of surgeries that do the same basic thing, people do lose a significant amount of weight. Those individuals may not have been able to lose weight in any other way, especially at this rate.

The Science Behind Gastric Bypass

Gastric bypass is a surgical procedure that allows individuals to lower their weight significantly. In basic terms, it splits the stomach pouch in the body in two pieces, allowing only the very small top section to be able to handle a meal. In doing this, the surgery cuts the stomach down so much so that people can only eat small amounts of food at one time. As they do this, they will gradually lose weight simply because they are not getting as many calories at one time to digest.

The gastric bypass process can happen in one of several ways. In each way, the same basic results are to be had. Through this procedure, your stomach is reduced in size by 90% or more. While a normal human's stomach can stretch as large as 1000 ml those that have had gastric bypass can no longer reach this size. Instead, their stomach is shortened to about 15ml instead.

In your stomach, there are muscles that are easily stretched. As you eat, your stomach stretches to hold the food that you consume. In effect, you can gradually increase your stomach's size by eating a bit more each time you eat. Yet, each time you do this, it takes more food to fill your stomach and give you that full sensation that tells you to stop eating. By the same token, by eating less over a period of time, your stomach can shrink enough to where you feel full faster.

Yet, for those that are candidates for gastric bypass surgery, the stomach is shrunk for them. Usually, the area of the stomach that is the least capable of stretching is the part that will be used for food from that point on. That means that your stomach simply is not as likely to stretch to the point where you are consuming more food than you need.

The fact is that your body will trigger the brain that full sensation with just a few bites of food. When that trigger happens, though, very few people stop eating. Unfortunately this is a problem many have. Yet, if you have gastric bypass done and you continue to eat, you leave yourself in a position of discomfort as well as even the possibility of vomiting. Your body learns quickly just how much food can be eaten.

Although the process seems simple, there are many risks involved. Nevertheless, you can benefit from this smaller sized stomach very quickly in the way of weight loss.

Laparoscopic Surgery

There are several methods that a surgeon can use to do gastric bypass surgery. The various choices are often selected based on what the patient needs, the doctor's abilities and preferences, as well as the risks and well being of the patient. Gastric bypass in any form is a surgery in which there is risk and it is a major, life changing operation. Therefore, much consideration is placed in what type of surgery will be done by the doctor.

Laparoscopic is one of those methods. It is thought that laparoscopy surgery is one of the most beneficial methods of having bariatric, or gastric bypass surgery. It is estimated that more and

more individuals will have this type of gastric bypass surgery over others as time moves on. In fact, it is thought that the benefits that it can provide to the patient is one of the reasons more and more people are considering gastric bypass surgery as a method of weight loss.

The Benefits?

What are the benefits of laparoscopy, then? First off, there is a reduce amount of incision to the patient. Laparoscopic surgery involves the doctor using very small incisions in the body rather than one large one. Here, he uses these incisions, called ports, to access the correct area. A video camera is actually placed into one of the ports in which the doctor can view his procedure happening on a video monitor rather than as it is happening. Other ports are placed as needed so that the doctor can insert the necessary surgical tools to do the task at hand. With smaller incisions and less damage to the tissues of the body, the healing time is much increased.

The other benefits of laparoscopic surgery for gastric bypass include things that affect the patient dramatically. He or she is likely to remain in the hospital for a shortened period of time. He or she will not feel as much pain or discomfort from this form of surgery either. In addition, the recovery time as a whole is much less. There is less risk of some forms of infection as well, minimizing even more of the risk of gastric bypass. Finally, there is less scaring for the patient both internally and externally. Laparoscopy is probably one of the most progressive and difficult types of surgery for a doctor to use, but those that are skilled at it have little to no problem performing it for patients.

Understanding the Gastric Bypass Procedure

Gastric Bypass is one of the fastest growing surgical procedures today. Yet, there are several forms of it. Each person who wishes to use gastric bypass to aid in their weight loss will need to work with their doctor to determine what the right type of procedure is for them. It is highly unlikely that you, as the patient, can choose which the one you have done is simply because your doctor will want to insure that the risks of the surgery are minimized for you. But, by all means, you should talk to your surgeon about which type of gastric bypass surgery is right for you and why that is so.

To help you to understand the various options that you have, we have listed some information here. The basic surgical procedure for gastric bypass will have several key steps. The doctor will first create a small pouch, about the size of your thumb, using the upper stomach muscles. Then, he will create a bypass of the rest of your stomach that will lessen the amount of food that you can eat significantly. In some cases, this will be done with the stomach simply being partitioned off, but in others means a total divide of the stomach to keep the two sections of your stomach from healing back together and reversing the gastric bypass.

In addition, there is the need for your doctor to reconstruct the gastro intestinal track within your body so that there is enough drainage from both parts of your stomach to the track. This is where things can be different from one procedure to the next. Some doctors will encourage a various difference in the lengths of the small bowel; others will take into account the amount

of food that can be absorbed into the body and more. The most important aspect here, for the doctor, is providing the most nutritionally beneficial means to gastric bypass.

The most common type of gastric bypass surgery is that of Roux en-Y Promimal. Here, the surgery is less likely to cause problems with your nutrition as in some other forms for the procedure. In this procedure, the small bowel is divided to allow for a Y shape which allows for food to enter from the smaller stomach pouch. This procedure also allows you to feel rapidly the sense of being full and then an indifference to the food you are eating rather quickly, aiding in the reduction of the amount of food you consume.

As part of your screening for gastric bypass surgery, your doctor should talk to you about what specifically will happen to you. If he doesn't, ask.

Should I Consider Gastric Bypass?

There are countless people having gastric bypass done, but the decision to have this procedure done is one that only you can make. Ultimately, it is you and your body that make the call here. There are many surgeons performing this life saving surgery every day. Yet, it is important for you to consider if you actually are a candidate for having it done. Most surgeons do put stipulations on who can have gastric bypass simply because of the risks involved.

Morbidly Obese

Many people that are obese do not realize how morbidly they are so. Only patients that are seriously obese do qualify for gastric bypass surgery. Before ruling yourself out of this, though, consider what qualifications are used to meet these criteria.

- In some cases, especially for insurance reasons, you must be at least 100 pounds over your ideal body weight. This number can be quite misleading as each person has a different ideal body weight. This factor is only used rarely when it comes to determining your ability to have gastric bypass done.
- You must have a body mass index of 40 or higher. The body mass index is a consideration of how much body fat you have on your body. The higher the number, the more likely you are to be morbidly obese. You can find body mass calculators offered throughout the web, but the best ones are those that are offered by weight loss specialists or your doctor.
- If you have a body mass index that is at 35 and you have health conditions that are due at least in part to your weight, you may also be considered a good choice for gastric bypass.

But, That's Not All

There is more to having gastric bypass surgery than your weight. You will also have a number of tests done to your body. One of the most important is that of a psychological evaluation. If you have an eating problem that is triggered by emotions, having the surgery done does not relieve the problem. In fact, if you continue to eat poorly even after you have the surgery, due in part to emotional eating, you can completely gain back weight that you lose. Therefore,

handling the emotional and psychological aspects of your care is always done beforehand as part of the pre determination of qualification.

These standards are in place because of the risk of gastric bypass. Like any other type of major surgery, care must be taken to determine if the risks outweigh the benefits.

What Should I Expect From Gastric Bypass Surgery?

If you are considering gastric bypass surgery, there are several key things that are likely to happen to you. With each person, though, there are differences that are likely to play a role. What your body goes through and reacts to is different from the next person. That is why it is imperative to learn about gastric bypass and how it works. If you work with this surgery, you can quickly lose quite a bit of weight. If you do not do so, you can slowly lose weight or even continue to maintain your current weight.

What Happens

When doctors perform gastric bypass surgery, they will actually be shrinking the size of your stomach. Your stomach is a very stretchy tool that can be made bigger if you consume more food. But, doing this entices you to eat more than you should and therefore you gain weight. When you have gastric bypass surgery done, you actually will end up losing weight because your body can only eat small portions at a time. The surgery does not remove the stomach, but cuts it in half allowing your body to feel fuller faster.

After you have your gastric bypass surgery, you will then have a time period of eating just liquid foods. This is so that your stomach can heal before real food is introduced to it. For many, this time period is as short as a week, some less and some more. Slowly, you will be able to eat more and more solid foods until you are eating regular foods again. Yet, you will find that you are eating far less than what you were before having gastric bypass done.

You will find that you will need to eat more meals per day, but that they will be considerably less. You may eat a piece of fruit and then a few hours later eat a few pieces of bread. It is unlikely that you will be able to sit down for an 8 course meal though. It will be very important for you to eat a healthy diet. If you consume foods that are high in trans fats or are simply unhealthy for you, then your body will not get the nutrients that it needs to power your muscles. Remember, you will be eating far less so what you put into your body must be fuel for your daily lifestyle.

Life changes after gastric bypass. In some patients, 60% to 80% of their excess weight can be lost with the correct following of a gastric bypass lifestyle. Although the process of getting there is a bit more challenging, it usually leads to rewards.

Gastric Bypass Risks

As part of learning about gastric bypass, it is essential that you learn about the risks that are involved with it. As with any type of surgery, there are things that can go wrong. Rest assured, though, that any good gastric bypass surgeon will insure that these risks are minimized in any possible way they can be. If you are a candidate for gastric bypass, these risks are still there, but hopefully minimized for you.

Here are some of the complications that can happen to those that seek out gastric bypass surgery.

Fatality

In some cases, about .5% of patients, there is the risk of death. Usually, this risk is there due to other conditions that are pre existing rather than the actual surgery itself. For example, those that have heart disease are at an increased risk as the heart is already taxed at this point. Yet, most doctors will do a full work up on the heart to determine if it can handle this type of surgery as part of the qualification process. In addition, other conditions such as obstructive sleep apnea, diabetes mellitus, or problems with pulmonary embolism can cause additional risk.

Infection

As with any type of surgery, there is a risk of infection. Infection can happen in several ways. The most common is that of infection at the incision locations. If bacteria from the bowel enter this area, there are increased risks here. You may end up with conditions such as kidney and bladder infections or even pneumonia. To help in prevention of these problems, your doctor is likely to provide you with antibiotics after surgery to insure that it does not happen.

Hemorrhaging

Another complication of gastric bypass surgery is that of hemorrhaging. Because so many blood vessels may be cut in the surgery, there may be a bit of bleeding that gets beyond the safe point. When this happens, you may need to have a transfusion.

Bowel Obstruction

In some rare cases, there may be scarring in the bowel area that can lead to a bowel obstruction. This can also be a reason that you may end up with a hernia. In some cases, it may be necessary to have another operation to correct this problem.

Although there are complications and risks that come with having gastric bypass surgery, most of them are due in part to conditions you already may have. Nevertheless, your doctor will work with you and provide you with the most assurance that these risks will be minimized. In most cases, especially in death, the risks are quite low.

Is My Health In Need Of Gastric Bypass?

Being overweight is not necessarily the only thing that should be a consideration in having gastric bypass or not. There are a number of health related problems that may be helped if you have gastric bypass done. These conditions will be seriously considered by your doctor first, to determine if the risks of gastric bypass and your health allow for these benefits to happen. In many cases, people will find themselves faced with the fact that their health conditions can be worsened by gastric bypass. Yet, for others, it can be life saving.

Conditions That May Be Helped

One of the major players in the role of qualifying for gastric bypass is that of having heart conditions. There are a few that are considered to be too risky for many people to handle. Your heart must be strong enough to be able to handle the surgery. But, there are some heart related conditions that can be helped by losing weight. Condition such as hypercholesterolemia, atherosclerosis, and hypertriglyceridemia may be conditions in which your doctor considers gastric bypass. This is because these conditions can often lead to more serious conditions such as cardiovascular disease including congestive heart failure, coronary artery disease and hardening of the arteries.

If you are overweight, the more so the worse, you are more likely to develop hypertension, also known as high blood pressure. This too can lead to cardiovascular disease and be considered life threatening. By losing weight, you can lower your risks.

Some forms of diabetes can also be helped or the risks of getting them can be minimized by having gastric bypass as well. Here, losing weight can actually lower your risk levels and even reverse the beginning signs of diabetes, especially Type 2. If you do not lose the weight to stop these conditions, things like kidney failure, damage to your nerves, problems with your heart, and even amputations may be necessary down the road.

Other conditions that may be helped by gastric bypass include gall bladder problems, sleep apnea, gastro esophageal reflux disease, liver disease, problems with bone structure and much more. As you can clearly see, there are health benefits that come from having gastric bypass surgery that would take much longer to see the benefits of in other methods of weight loss. Having the rapid weight loss that gastric bypass can provide can help you to hold off these conditions that can easily shorten your lifespan considerably.

Who Should Not Have Gastric Bypass?

Gastric bypass and its amazing weight loss benefits are not for everyone. Even those that meet the criteria for being morbidly obese may not qualify to have gastric bypass done. This can be frustrating, but the fact is that for some people, the risks far outweigh the possible benefits that they can see. Most doctors have their own criteria for determining if you do or do not qualify, but there are some conditions that you may have that will not be Okayed by most doctors who perform gastric bypass.

Why People May Not Qualify

Like with any other type of surgery, gastric bypass does tax the body. The surgery itself is one that can be somewhat invasive, depending on the type that is done. The goal is to have the patient be in as best health as possible before having the surgery so that the risks that are associated with it are lessened, at least to some degree. Some individuals that have conditions with their heart may not actually qualify for gastric bypass. The heart is an organ in the body that can be drastically impacted by many types of surgery, including this one. Therefore, if the heart is not strong enough, by the surgeon's determinations, he or she may not qualify for gastric bypass.

There are some cases in which you and your doctor can work on finding a solution to the health concerns that are found. For example, some doctors will require that you lose 5% to 10% of the amount of excess weight you need to lose. By losing even just this small amount of weight, your body is less at risk to have gastric bypass. You will actually lessen the heart's workload, making it less likely to fail. To find out if you are a candidate for this benefit, talk to your doctor about it. In many cases, it is standard procedure.

Almost always, you will need to pass through several screening tests to determine your health and well being, as well as the risk factors that you face before you can be considered for gastric bypass surgery. You will quickly see that having this surgery done is not something that happens quickly at all. It takes time to insure that your body's organs, including your heart, and your psychological state are all in the right shape to have this life changing surgery.

Life After Gastric Bypass

Having gastric bypass does not immediately make you lose weight and feel great. The process does take time and it does open the door for all sorts of issues down the road. Those that face problems with gastric bypass will often do so, on the psychological level of it rather than on the physical aspect. Although there are risks at both ends, the goal is to find the benefits of gastric bypass with the least amount of problems along the way. To help in that, it is wise to understand what your life will be like after you have gastric bypass.

The first months after having the gastric bypass procedure done are usually the hardest months. Not only is the body healing at this point, but it is also going through a large change. It is common to feel bad while your body is adjusting to taking in less actual food, burning off the fat that is stored and even to its new shape and form. Some things that can be experienced after gastric bypass include these.

- Those that face problems with emotional eating will need counseling of some sort to come to terms with it. They physically can not eat whatever and whenever they want to settle those emotions after having gastric bypass done.
- Depression and anxiety can increase as people battle self image problems.
- Negative feelings can be noticeable due to the limitations that the person has physically during the first few months as their body begins to lose weight.
- Right after surgery, energy levels are low due to the impact of the surgery itself.

- Emotional turbulence can be evident for up to three months after having gastric bypass.
- The body's muscular system may be weakened including the limited amount of protein entering the body. Sometimes, muscle loss can happen if the individual does not follow the correct diet from the beginning.
- Fatigue and overall weakness is a result for the first few weeks as the body adjusts to the lessened intake of calories.

Yet, what is important to realize is that most of these symptoms and problems after gastric bypass do go away. It may take some coaching and counseling for those with psychological problems, but the physical and mental body can heal and reap the rewards of gastric bypass and the weight loss. In many cases, people begin to see weight falling off quickly within a matter of days of having the surgery. Some reports are that individuals can drop over 100 pounds within a year of having the surgery. Talk to your doctor about your individual goals and prognosis to learn more about gastric bypass's individual results for your body.

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