



**BARIATRIC
SURGERY
SUPPORT**

Weight-Loss Surgery

The Process

Overview

The purpose of this publication is to explain the Comprehensive program that surrounds **Weight-Loss Surgery** in order to provide the highest level of pre and post surgical care to our patients.

Bariatric Surgery Support (BSS) is a unique initiative aimed at empowering people, through involvement and communication. It is the collective concept of **Dr Andre Potgieter**, **Dr Etienne Swanepoel**, and their **Patients**. It is a holistic approach focused on the patient/doctor relationship.

Weight loss surgery is more than just surgery in itself. There is an extensive **qualification process** and lifelong commitment to the lifestyle changes after the surgery. It is important for prospective bariatric patients to note that we follow a **Team approach** to Obesity Surgery. Our Bariatric team of professionals typically consists of Doctors and other service providers notably; Surgeons, Physicians, a Dietitian, Psychiatrists, Anesthetists, Admin Staff and Support Group consultants.

Preparation for surgery is comprehensive and one can only qualify for Surgery if and when all members of our Bariatric Team have given their go-ahead.

If for whatever reason one member of our team has concerns about a patient's readiness for surgery – then surgery will not take place until all risk factors for that particular patient has been eliminated.

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“Cutting corners by operating before you are in optimal condition, meaning the best you can be under your circumstances, can put you at serious risk.

Death is a known complication from bariatric surgery, even in the best hands. ,,

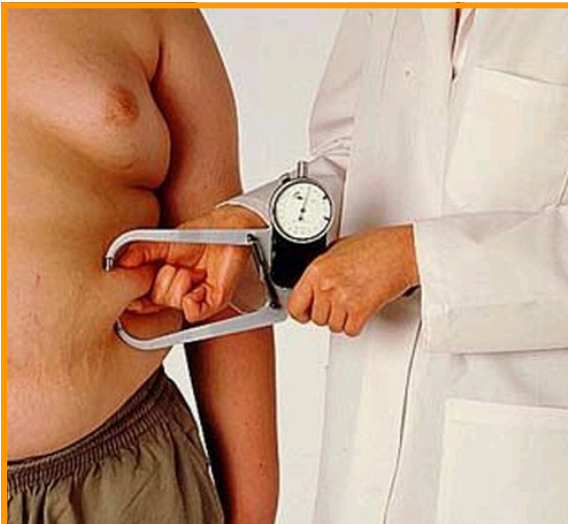


Qualifying For Surgery

Weight loss surgery is not right for everyone. You should take in consideration of all the hard work, lifestyle change and motivation it will take after surgery. Obesity surgery is an effective treatment for morbid obesity, although the pounds do not come off by themselves. The surgery is an aid to help achieve lasting results by limiting your food intake.

Obesity surgery is major surgery and carries with it risk, discomfort and cost. It is important, therefore, that this treatment for obesity be reserved for individuals whose obesity is so severe that their health and even life are at significant risk from complications of the obesity.

You will usually be referred to a Bariatric Surgeon by your **(Personal Doctor) GP** after careful consideration has been given to the risks which your current condition presents to your health.



To qualify as a suitable candidate for Obesity Surgery your **Body Mass Index** is measured as follows:

Measure your height in meters (e.g., 1,75 m) and measure your weight in kg (e.g., 125 kg). Then divide your height squared (ie. $1,75 \times 1,75 = 3,06$) into your weight in kg. The answer in this example is 40. This is called your **body mass index (BMI)**. If your BMI is 40 or above, you will qualify for surgery, provided there are no contraindications (these can only be established during your consultation with the surgeon and thereafter with the other team members).

If your BMI is at least 35 and you have other health problems e.g., diabetes or heart disease,

To assure that we perform surgery only on individuals who can benefit from it, our **Bariatric Surgeons** (**Dr Etienne Swanepoel and Dr Andre Potgieter**) evaluate each candidate for surgery carefully.

This evaluation includes examinations by a **Dietitian**, a **Psychologist**, an **Internist** and an **Anesthetists**.

“Obesity surgery is major surgery and carries with it risk, discomfort and cost. An estimated figure for this type of surgery is R130,000 upwards, depending on the procedure that is best suited for your individual case.

”



Make An Appointment

You will need to Consult with all the Members of our Bariatric Team which includes:

Bariatric Surgeons **Dr.Andre Potgieter** at N1 City Hospital 021-595-2280 and

Dr Etienne Swanepoel at Durbanville Medi Clinic.021- 975-2594

Bariatric Dietitian **Judy Kotze** 083 254 0919 (021) 975 2336



Additionally you will also need to consult with the following professionals who's names will be given to you by your Surgeon's office:

Psychiatrist

Physician

Sonar upper abdomen Scan

Sleep apnea studies

Anesthetist

It is important that an individual's physical and psychological condition be at optimal levels to tolerate the stress of surgery. If you have physical or psychological problems that would make anesthesia, surgery, and the recovery after surgery too risky or that would reduce the benefit you might get from the surgery, our Bariatric Team will work with you, your **General Practitioner**, and other doctors involved in your care to see whether those problems can be corrected to the point at which surgery can be done safely. It is rare for such problems to be so severe that we cannot proceed with weight loss surgery, but it may require considerable effort on the part of patient and doctors to achieve this.

We are often asked how long it takes to get from the information session to the day of surgery. The answer is that it depends most on how much work you have to do to make the changes in your diet and exercise pattern that will help you get the most from your surgery. It can be as little as two months, but most people need more time than this to get ready. **For most people, it may take from four to six months to get from attending the information session to the day of surgery.** The dietitian, psychologist, internist, nurse, and surgeon all work with you to determine when it will be safe for you to have the surgery and when you have made the lifestyle changes that will help you succeed.



*“ The National South African Program for Bariatric Surgery operates from a **Patient Safety First** perspective and Surgery will not be considered if a patient suffers from any unresolved clinical issues i.e. high blood pressure „*



Comprehensive Consultation

CAUTION
READ
INSTRUCTIONS
BEFORE OPERATING

Financial Considerations

During your initial Consultation your Surgeon's office staff will discuss the Surgery fees and help you with Medical Aid Pre-Authorization as necessary. Patients should be aware that there are out-of-pocket expenses, and some Medical Aid policies may cover one type of weight loss surgery and not another type of surgery. The patient expenses can vary. Patients should contact their Medical Aid company directly to confirm their policy benefits for weight loss surgery. Certain Medical Aid companies may even further specify which hospitals that surgery can take place.

Surgical Options and Comprehensive Pre-Operative Tests



A thorough discussion regarding your surgical options will be presented that fit your individual needs.

After your comprehensive Consultation with your Surgeon you will be instructed to obtain a Pre-Operative History and Physical evaluation with your Physician for clearance for general anesthesia and supporting statements for Bariatric Surgery, a psychological clearance by a qualified Psychologist, Psychiatrist or Therapist, and a nutritional evaluation by a qualified Nutritionist.

These steps often need to be completed in order to request Medical Aid Pre-Authorization. In addition, a customized list of Pre-Operative Testing will also be necessary to prepare for surgery.

Patients are asked to lose some weight prior to surgery in a healthy manner to optimize the results of the surgery itself. Pre-Operative weight loss has been shown to shrink the liver size which may be enlarged and fatty in an obese person. A grossly enlarged liver that comes from gaining weight can interfere with surgery and possibly put the patient at higher risk for complications.

Patients are asked to stop aspirin and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as ibuprofen, Advil, Motrin, Naproxyn at least 7 days prior to surgery. Patients on even stronger blood thinners such as Plavix need to stop 10 days prior to surgery. Other medications such as those that treat diabetes should be adjusted and even stopped the day of surgery 2 prior to surgery depending on their type. High blood pressure medications should be taken the morning of surgery, except for diuretics or water pills. All alternative-medicine or herbal medications need to be stopped 7 days prior to surgery. Please follow your Surgeons directions very carefully.

If you smoke, you need to stop at least 4-6 weeks prior to surgery to minimize the chance for lung failure, poor healing and other very serious, life-threatening complications. You will be asked to submit a specific test just prior to surgery to confirm this.

"From the time you meet with your Surgeon your goal is to remember that it is the first day on the road to a healthier life. Bariatric surgery is only a tool. You have to use the tool properly to succeed. Follow your Surgeon's instructions carefully.,,"



Surgery

Your surgeon will give you specific instructions on how to prepare for the procedure. Your stomach must be completely empty to reduce the changes of vomiting during the procedure. It is important that you abstain from food and liquid after midnight the evening before your surgery.

You will report to a pre-operative nursing unit, where you will change into a hospital gown. A nurse will review your chart and confirm that all paperwork is in order. You will be taken to a pre-operative nursing unit where an anesthesiologist will start an IV. Before any medications are administered, your surgeon will verify your name and the type of procedure you are having. You will then be taken to the operating room. Gastric bypass surgery is performed under general anesthesia, which will keep you asleep during your surgery.



Gastric bypass surgery is performed Laparoscopically. Your surgeon will make five to seven small incisions, and insert tube-like instruments through them. The abdomen will be filled with gas to help the surgeon view the abdominal cavity. A camera will be inserted through one of the tubes that will display images on a monitor in the operating room. In this manner, your surgeon will be able to work inside your abdomen without making a larger incision.

During the Roux-en-Y procedure, the stomach is divided and separated. A small pouch is created at the top of the stomach and the rest is permanently separated. The small intestine is then attached to the new pouch creating a new digestive tract.

Once the surgery is completed, you will be taken to a post-operative or recovery unit where a nurse will monitor your progress. It is important that your bandages be kept clean and dry. You will be asked to walk the night of surgery. You will undergo a swallow study on the first postoperative day to make sure there are no problems.

If there are no problems, you will be discharged on postoperative day two. You will be scheduled for a follow-up appointment within two weeks after you are discharged from the hospital.

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Life After Surgery

Diet and Lifestyle Changes

It is very important that you adhere to a recommended dietary guideline. The modifications that have been made to your gastrointestinal tract will require permanent changes in your eating habits that must be adhered to for a successful weight loss. The following are some general dietary weight loss surgery guidelines:

- Don't drink fluids while eating. Fluids tend to make you feel full before you have consumed enough food.
- When it is time to start eating solid food it is essential that you chew your food thoroughly. You will not be able to eat steaks or other chunks of meat if they are not ground or chewed thoroughly.
- Avoid carbonated drinks, milk shakes, high-calorie nutritional supplements, high-fat foods and foods with high fiber.
- Limit your snacking between meals.
- Avoid items with sugar listed as one of the first three ingredients on the food labels.
- Avoid alcohol.

Please note that the dietary guidelines may be different for each weight loss procedure that is performed. For more information please contact our Resident Dietitian, **Judy Kotze** on **021 975 2336** for more specific dietary guidelines.

Some of the most important lifestyle changes to adapt to after weight loss surgery include:

- Slowly increasing physical activity
- Assessing and logging in daily food intake
- Undergoing counseling to adapt to the changing body image
- Eliminating social situations that promote overeating
- Tackling any emotional issues that triggered overeating with a therapist
- Making time to prepare special foods and meals to complement a healthier lifestyle

Support Group



Weight loss surgery will not resolve immediate existing emotional issues or heal the years of damage that obesity might have inflicted on your well being. Seek social support from others who have undergone weight loss surgery.

Bariatric Surgery Support (BSS) is a Cape Town based Support Group for people seeking information and Support about Weight-Loss Surgery. We deal with a host of pre and post operation issues aimed at facilitating your journey to a healthier life style.



Contact Us

*Meet The Team These are the Professionals
that will support you during your Life Changing*



**Bariatric
Surgery Support**
South African
Weight-Loss Surgery
Support Group



Dr. JA Potgieter - Specialist Surgeon

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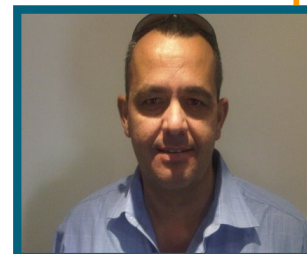
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