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Bariatric Surgery Support

NEWSLETTER

TIPPLING THE SCALES

Most South Africans enjoy a life of sunshine braai (BBQ) and the odd tipple of our favorite alcoholic beverage while relaxing with friends and family on a weekend. Well ,it seems that, the odd tipple may have serious consequences for those of us that have had Bariatric Surgery.

According to a recent American Study researchers have concluded that some people who undergo weight-loss surgery end up trading their struggle with food for one with alcohol – but perhaps not for the reason you think.

The largest prospective study to examine the connection found that 10.7% of patients who underwent a bariatric operation called roux-en-Y gastric bypass got in trouble with drinking by the second year after the surgery. That compared with about 7% of patients who drank too much before they had the same operation, reflecting a 50% increase in relative risk.

The results, presented in June this year, at a meeting of the **American Society for Metabolic & Bariatric Surgery in San Diego**, are based on 1,945 patients, 70% of whom had the roux-en-Y operation. They are consistent with smaller studies and anecdotal reports suggesting a link between weight-loss surgery and alcohol abuse.

The earlier reports led some experts to speculate that patients were swapping one addiction for another – a phenomenon psychiatrists call addiction transfer.



But “the [new] study doesn’t support that,” Wendy King, lead author and an epidemiologist at University of Pittsburgh’s Graduate School of Public Health, tells the Health Blog. For one thing, King says, most of the patients who didn’t have the roux-en-Y operation had a less-invasive lap band procedure, which wasn’t associated with an increase in alcohol problems after the operation. Indeed, having the roux-en-Y doubled a patient’s risk of alcohol dependence or abuse after the operation.

“If it was shifting addictions, it seems like you would expect to find it in both procedures,” King says.

For another, 16% of the patients were classified as binge eaters, an indicator of food addiction, and they weren’t any more likely than other bariatric-surgery patients to develop new alcohol problems after the procedure.

So what might account for the increased risk associated with roux-en-Y? By shrinking the stomach and bypassing the upper portion of the small intestine, the operation changes the way people digest alcohol, King suggests.

“Alcohol spends less time in the stomach and gets absorbed in the intestine more rapidly,” King says. And “it takes longer to return to a sober state.” (The lap band makes the stomach smaller but doesn’t alter the intestinal track.)



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**What will you do
today to manage
your weight
better?**

Inside this issue:

TIPPLING THE SCALES	1
TIPPLING THE SCALES	2
ALCOHOL & GBS	3
TEAM	4
MOTIVATION	5
QUESTION	5

TIPPLING THE SCALES continued

The study, sponsored by the National Institutes of Health and also published online by the Journal of the American Medical Association, found that patients consumed less alcohol during the first year after surgery than prior to the operation.

But by the second year, patients drank more frequently than they did before surgery and consumed as much alcohol on a typical day as when they drank prior to their operations.

"It may be that the changes in alcohol sensitivity from the surgery coupled with the increase in alcohol consumption explain why we found an increase" in alcohol dependence and abuse, King says.

Interestingly, it is the same gastric bypass that other researchers believe results in the roux-en Y's biggest benefit beyond weight loss itself: For many such patients the procedure appears to cure diabetes or substantially improve their blood sugar levels.

King says the implications of the new study aren't to steer people who need it away from the surgery, but to prompt clinicians and patients alike to be aware of the potential associated risks of alcohol abuse.

She noted that high-calorie consumption associated with excessive drinking can offset the weight-loss benefits of bariatric surgery and that alcohol can have deleterious effects on the liver and overall nutrition.

There's a need to "educate patients not just on the risk of alcohol use disorders," King says, but on how the "negative effects" of high alcohol consumption "might sabotage some of the goals of bariatric surgery."

Source: The Wall Street Journal—Health Blog:

<http://blogs.wsj.com/health/2012/06/19/an-unintended-consequence-of-weight-loss-surgery-alcohol-abuse/>



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Cape Town Named SA’s Boozing Capital, Western Cape Booziest Province

The Department of Health has released the results of a study completed earlier this year that paints a grim picture of both Cape Town and the Western Cape's rampant use and abuse of alcohol. Long story short, the study concludes that Cape Town is South Africa's drunkest city, and the Western Cape its booziest province. Er, get that city a Bells?

Some of the more shocking statistics include:

50% of the city's population drink regularly.

One third of the city's population abuse alcohol regularly.

Approximately 66% of school pupils in the Western Cape (Grades 8 to 10) drink alcohol.

One quarter of that 66% admit to binge drinking.

These results are part of the PR drive the Department is undertaking to promote a documentary series it made last year called “Booza TV” which takes a look at drinking culture in South Africa. They are also liaising with community organizations in order to plan campaigns to curb the rampant abuse of alcohol in the Western Cape through awareness-raising and advocacy.

The report points to a number of factors that are responsible for the massive use of alcohol in the city and the province, including the relative ease with which alcohol can be acquired, the high stress levels and violence associated with life in certain sectors, as well as the widespread marketing of alcohol.

Source:

<http://www.2oceansvibe.com/2012/03/15/cape-town-named-sas-boozing-capital-western-cape-booziest-province/>

Facts of Drinking Alcohol After Having Gastric Bypass

Gastric Bypass surgery is a procedure in which doctors bypass the stomach and create a pouch that changes the anatomy of your digestive system. It is used primarily in people who have serious obesity problems to help them lose weight. The procedure is a serious one and requires a patient to be cautious about many things during the recovery period. One of those things is alcohol consumption.

Don't Drink For a While

Doctors who perform gastric bypass surgery have strict advice about drinking alcohol after surgery. Most agree that a gastric bypass patient shouldn't have alcohol for at least six months after the surgery. Some doctors recommend that patients stay away from alcohol for at least a year. From a surgical standpoint, eliminating alcohol aids in the healing process, as introducing alcohol to the new environment can cause stomach irritation and ulcers.

Defeating the Purpose

In many ways, doctors say that consuming alcohol defeats the purpose of the surgery. One, Dr. Julie Ellner of Ellner Bariatric in San Diego, Calif., spells out why. Alcohol converts readily into blood sugar that can slow down a patient's weight loss and can cause something called dumping syndrome, which is when food is emptied into the small intestine too soon and can cause vomiting or diarrhea. Alcoholic drinks also don't include much nutritional value.

Getting Drunk Quicker

Because the stomach pouch created in the surgery is much smaller than a normal stomach, patients have a tendency to become inebriated quicker than normal people. For instance, Dr. Ellner says that a gastric bypass patient can absorb alcohol four times faster than a non-gastric bypass patient. For that reason, she recommends not drinking and driving up to 24 hours after consuming an alcoholic beverage after surgery.

Transferring Addiction

The use of gastric bypass surgery is typically for those who have serious obesity problems and, in some cases, people who are addicted to food. While the surgery typically helps patients with that problem, they can transfer their addiction to another vice. One study found that this addiction transfer can occur in up to 25 percent of gastric bypass patients who had previous addictions to food. Sometimes that addiction can be transferred to alcohol.

If You Drink

Should you decide to start drinking after surgery, doctors recommend that you first wait the appropriate recovery time. Once you resume drinking alcohol, doctors say that you should drink only on rare occasions and you should drink in small quantities so as to avoid quick inebriation, dumping syndrome and other potential problems.

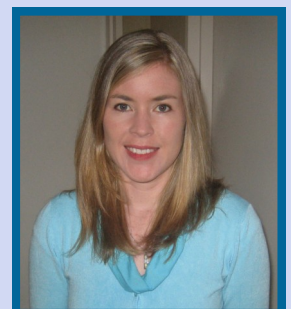


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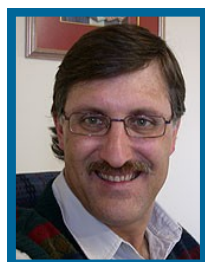
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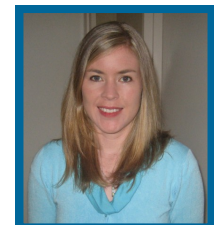
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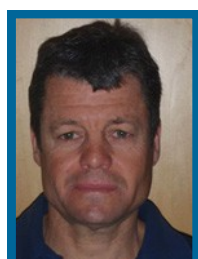
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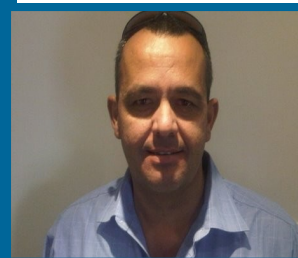
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Bariatric Surgery Support Group

Monthly MEETING



21 August 2012

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.

When: Tuesday 21 August 2012 — **N1 CITY**

Where: N1 Medical Chambers, First Floor, Training Room

Time: 18:00

RSVP: info@bariatricsurgerysupport.co.za

Contact Collette collette@simpsons.co.za

Motivation of the Month

New richness

It's important to have constants in life. It's also good and useful to have novelty.

Today is not here just so it can be an exact repeat of yesterday.

Honor each new day by filling it with new experience and substance.

Don't hold yourself back by keeping yourself imprisoned in the same old routine. Outside that routine are great and wonderful possibilities waiting to be explored.

Be satisfied with how far you've come, and eager to keep on going in new and exciting ways. Life's beauty knows no limit, so don't limit yourself to what you're already familiar with.

Seek out new things to do and new ways to do them. Enjoy discovering new challenges, new opportunities and new ways to create new forms of value.

Life begins again in every moment. Use the opportunity to add new and fulfilling richness to your world



Question of the Month

Is it OK to drink, in moderation, if you are not driving, several months or years after gastric bypass?

We just do not have the final answer, and prefer to err on the cautious side. Better be safe than sorry.

