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What You Gain and Lose from Gastric Bypass Surgery

Obesity is a serious health problem across the globe. That is why a number of methods, techniques, and technologies have been developed to help curb weight problems that usually lead to life-threatening diseases such as heart ailments and diabetes. One of the most popular weight loss strategies is gastric bypass surgery, a procedure that alters the digestive system (particularly the stomach) to restrain a person's food intake.

The results of the surgery are immediate—a patient may lose 50 to 60 percent of his weight within two years following the surgery. With healthy lifestyle (including proper diet and regular exercise), one can expect weight loss in the long run after the surgery. Those who are overweight will experience easier mobility and better quality of life after undergoing weight loss surgery.

But there's more to this surgery than just weight loss. Aside from slashing off some figures from the weighing scale, the surgery also helps improve certain conditions that are often linked to obesity. These health problems include high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, sleep apnea, high blood cholesterol, and gastroesophageal reflux disease. Thus, people who have gone through weight loss surgery are less likely to develop cardiovascular problems than those who have not tried the procedure. Also, the surgery can lessen a patient's possibility of death due to heart ailment, diabetes, or cancer.

Now for the not-so good news. Weight loss surgery is not for the faint of hearts. As with other kinds of surgeries, weight loss surgery leads to several complications. If you will go through this procedure, you need to know the risks before you head over the clinic or hospital. Being aware of what to expect after the surgery helps a lot in your recovery process. The most common complications of the surgery include infection, bleeding, and swelling. Other complications are ulcer, low blood sugar, kidney stones, gallstones, iron deficiency anemia, and vitamin D and B-12 deficiency. After the operation, a patient may also experience vomiting, diarrhea, nausea, and dizziness especially when eating foods rich in sugar and fat. These are caused by a condition called dumping syndrome in which the contents of the stomach pass through the small intestine very fast.

There are certain postoperative risks that occur in rare cases but are severe and need immediate medical attention. The following are some of the complications and tips on how to deal with them.

1. Leak in the stomach

You may not consider everything you just read to be crucial information about Gastric Bypass. But don't be surprised if you find yourself recalling and using this very information in the next few days.

This is found at one of the staple lines in the stomach. The leak heals over time in most cases, though it can be treated using antibiotics. But severe cases require immediate surgery.

2. Thinning of the opening between the small intestine and stomach

This condition needs either a corrective surgery or a simple outpatient procedure wherein a tube is inserted through the mouth to make the opening wider.

3. Incision hernia or weakness in the incision

This complication happens if the surgery is an open procedure that involves a large incision on the abdomen. Incision hernia needs to be repaired through surgery depending on the severity of the condition.

4. Death

For every 200 to 300 weight loss surgeries, one case results in death. Although the risk of death has been linked to gastric bypass surgery, it still depends on many factors such as age and health and medical conditions.

About the Author

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