

Bariatric Surgery: Side Effects of Surgery

1. Why drink so much water?

When you are losing weight, there are many waste products to eliminate, mostly in the urine. Some of these substances tend to form crystals, which can cause kidney stones. A high water intake protects you and helps your body to rid itself of waste products efficiently, promoting better weight loss. Water also fills your stomach and helps to prolong and intensify your sense of satisfaction with food, if you feel a desire to eat between meals; it may be because you did not drink enough water in the hour before. Dehydration is one of the most common reasons for re-hospitalization. It can cause weakness, fatigue, light-headedness, dizziness, and constipation. Dehydration can also cause your heart to race and can increase the risk of developing irregular heartbeats. You should take in at least 2 quarts of fluids each day.

2. I only urinate once per day, is this normal?

No, this is not normal. Urinating only one time per day is a sign that you are not getting in enough fluids. Your body will try to conserve fluids by decreasing urine output when you are dehydrated. You should try to increase your fluid intake so that you are urinating at least 3-4 times each day. Your body should excrete at least 1000 ml (about 1 quart) of urine per day. You should increase your fluid intake if your urine output is much less than this amount. If you are unable to tolerate fluids due to nausea or vomiting, or if you are having other losses of fluid, (diarrhea, etc) you should contact your physician. You may benefit from some intravenous fluids to improve your hydration.

3. Is nausea or vomiting normal?

Vomiting is to be avoided as much as possible after surgery, especially during the first few weeks. Adequately chewing your food is very important, because food that is too large may plug up your outlet and cause vomiting. Consider nausea and vomiting to be signals that your body is sending you. It is your job to interpret these signals and adjust your eating behaviors in order to avoid these unpleasant signals. To identify the possible cause, ask yourself the following questions:

- Did I chew my food enough?

- Did I eat too fast?
- Did I eat too much?
- Did I drink too soon after eating?
- Did I eat foods not typically tolerated: i.e. Fried foods?
- Did I lie down too soon after eating?

If nausea causes frequent vomiting, or if you are unable to tolerate anything including fluids, call the Bariatric Office.

4. What is Dumping Syndrome?

Dumping syndrome is a term used to describe the unpleasant feeling that comes when a large volume of fluid is suddenly "dumped" into the upper jejunum. Symptoms include nausea, dizziness, light-headedness, sweating and sometimes vomiting. It can also be associated with abdominal pain. Foods that are very high in sugar content can produce these symptoms because they tend to cause fluid to be pulled into the intestinal tract. Individuals differ in their tolerance to these symptoms and how much physical discomfort they perceive following sugary meals. Although these symptoms are unpleasant when they occur, in many ways they are a "necessary evil" because they have been shown to reduce the frequency of binge eating after surgery and help to maintain weight loss. Dumping will occur in patients who have undergone the roux-en-y gastric bypass since the jejunum is attached directly to the small gastric pouch. It does not occur in gastric banding or sleeve gastrectomy.

5. What can I do to relieve constipation?

Dehydration is a common cause of constipation. Be sure to maintain your fluid intake at 64 ounces per day or more if needed. Constipation can also be related to inadequate physical activity. Make sure you are being physically active everyday include walking or another aerobic activity. It is very important to maintain fluid hydration. If you are not moving your bowels every 2-3 days, call the Bariatric Office.

6. Will I have Food Intolerances?

Every patient will have their own individual list of foods that "don't sit well". This may be a short or long list and may change frequently. Symptoms of food intolerance may include stomach discomfort, nausea or vomiting. Sometimes a food that is poorly tolerated now will be tolerated well down the road. Give yourself a few weeks before you try the food again. The following are common foods that may not be tolerated well:

- High fat foods, especially fried foods
- High sugar foods
- Tough meats especially beef steaks, lamb, or pork
- Membranes of fruits, like oranges
- Skins and seeds of some fruit or vegetables, like grapes
- Fibrous vegetables, such as corn and celery
- Fresh bread

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. What is the recommended age range for weight loss surgery?

Generally accepted guidelines from the American Society for Bariatric Surgery and the National Institutes of Health indicate surgery only for those 18 years of age and older. There is a real concern that young patients may not have reached full developmental or emotional maturity to make this type of decision.

Patients over 65 require very strong indications for surgery. The risk of surgery in this age group is increase and the benefits, in terms of reduced risk of mortality, are reduced.

2. Can weight loss surgery prolong my life?

There is good evidence from scientific research that if you have Type 2 diabetes (or other serious obesity-related health conditions), are at least 100 pounds over ideal body weight, and are able to comply with lifestyle changes (daily exercise and low-fat diet), then weight loss surgery may significantly prolong your life.

3. Can weight loss surgery help other physical conditions?

According to current research, weight loss surgery can improve or resolve associated health conditions.