

Discussing weight loss surgery with your doctor

Weight loss surgery can be effective for treating obesity and improving obesity-related conditions

It is important to discuss treatment options for obesity with your doctor. Lifestyle changes, weight loss medications, and weight loss surgery (also known as bariatric or bariatric-metabolic surgery) are all potential options for your weight loss journey.^{1,2}



Your doctor will explain what criteria you must meet to be eligible for weight loss surgery. To help determine whether weight loss surgery is suitable for you, your doctor will consider:³

- Your current BMI and weight: your doctor will need to weigh you and measure your BMI. [Click here](#) to access a BMI calculator*
- Your previous experience losing weight using nonsurgical methods
- Your ability to follow diet, exercise, and medical guidelines associated with the procedure, as weight loss surgery alone will not ensure weight loss or other long-term results are maintained
- Any other obesity-related health conditions or diseases.

Key features that are vital for a successful weight loss procedure

- Understanding and actively engaging in a lifestyle that supports achieving and maintaining a healthier weight³
- Staying connected with your surgeon, doctor, dietician, nurse, psychologist (if you have one), and other members of your medical team⁴

Who is a candidate for weight loss surgery?

Weight loss surgery may be a treatment option for you. Discuss the following criteria with your doctor:^{1,4-6}

BMI of 40 or above without other obesity-related conditions

BMI of 35 or above with 1 or more obesity-related conditions that may improve with weight loss

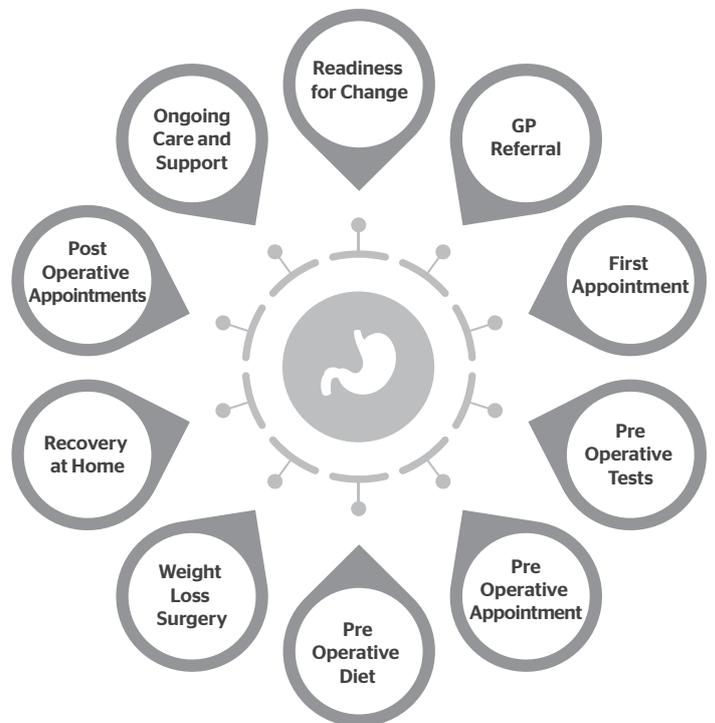
BMI of 30 or above with poorly controlled type 2 diabetes despite optimal medical therapy

Evidence of previous reasonable attempts to lose weight

Review your current medication and lifestyle choices, including smoking

No plans or likelihood for pregnancy during the first year after the procedure

Ability to understand the risks and commitments associated with the procedure.



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Important Safety Information. Since 2012, the Bariatric Surgery Registry has collected safety data from almost 90,000 people who have undergone bariatric (weight loss) surgery in Australia and New Zealand. In 2018-2019, the incidence of adverse events requiring unplanned return to surgery, intensive care unit admission, or hospital readmission in the first 90 days after primary (first-time) bariatric surgery was 21%. This indicates that around 1 in 50 people who undergo bariatric surgery will experience a complication such as leaking or narrowing (stricture) of the surgical connection, dehydration or electrolyte imbalance, abdominal pain, bleeding, or vomiting.⁷

Bariatric surgery is generally recommended for people with morbid obesity (BMI ≥ 40 kg/m²) or severe obesity (BMI ≥ 35 kg/m²) with ≥ 1 obesity-related conditions, but may be considered for those with a BMI 30-35 kg/m² who have poorly controlled type 2 diabetes.¹⁴ It may not be suitable for individuals with certain digestive tract conditions. You should consult your physicians to determine your need for a healthy energy controlled diet and physical activity, and whether bariatric surgery is appropriate for you.⁴ There are risks with any surgery, such as adverse reactions to medications, problems with anaesthesia, problems breathing, bleeding, blood clots, accidental injury to nearby organs and blood vessels, even death. Your weight, age, and medical history will determine your specific risks.⁸ Bariatric surgery has its own risks, including failure to lose weight, nutritional or vitamin deficiencies, and weight regain.³

References. 1. Mechanick JL, et al. *Endocr Pract.* 2019;25(12):1346-1359. 2. Papamargaritis D, le Roux CW. *Nutrients.* 2021;13(3):762. 3. Bray GA, et al. *Endocr Rev.* 2018;39(2):79-132. 4. Australian & New Zealand Obesity Society. *The Australian Obesity Management Algorithm.* 2020. Available: <https://www.anzos.com/publications> (accessed May 2021). 5. Australian & New Zealand Metabolic and Obesity Surgery Society. *Obesity: Am I A Candidate?* Available: <https://anzmoss.com.au/obesity/am-i-a-candidate/> (accessed May 2021). 6. International Federation for the Surgery of Obesity and Metabolic Disorders. *Are you a candidate.* Available: <https://www.ifso.com/are-you-a-candidate/> (accessed May 2021). 7. Monash University Bariatric Surgery Registry. *Bariatric Surgery Registry 2018/19 Report.* June 2019. Available: <https://www.monash.edu/medicine/sphpm/registries/bariatric/reports-publications> (accessed May 2021). 8. Mohabir PK, Coombs AV. *Surgery.* December 2020. MSD Manual Consumer Version. Available: <https://www.msdmanuals.com/en-au/home/special-subjects/surgery/surgery#> (accessed May 2021).

To be completed in discussion with your healthcare team.

Surgeon details

Name:

Email:

Telephone:

Practice address:

General practitioner (GP) details

Name:

Email:

Telephone:

Practice address: