

Is Weight Loss Surgery Right for You?

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Chapter 1 *Introduction*

If you are currently considering any form of weight loss surgery, it is likely that you have been thinking about your decision for some time. Certainly, it is a decision that warrants much thoughtful consideration. Hopefully this book will help you with various aspects of your decision-making process.

Perhaps you began to think about weight loss surgery after a conversation with your primary care physician, who was concerned about specific obesity-related health problems, such as heart disease, hypertension, high cholesterol, diabetes, or sleep apnea. Perhaps as weight loss surgeries of various types got more media coverage, you learned more about one or more of the procedures and thought that some form of weight loss surgery might be right for you. Possibly, a friend or relative has already undergone weight loss surgery. Or maybe you just began to research it on your own after years of struggling with more traditional methods of weight loss, typically involving dieting and exercise. In any case, you've obviously begun to think seriously about having surgery to correct your weight problem once and for all or you wouldn't be reading this.

The decision to pursue weight loss surgery should not be taken lightly. There are many factors to consider. This book contains all the need-to-know information about weight loss surgery and how to decide whether or not it is right for you. It will help guide you through the decision-making process by providing information on the various types of bariatric surgery available, their respective risks and benefits, the professional consultations and evaluations you will need to undergo prior to surgery, and what to expect postoperatively.

If you are considering weight loss surgery, this book will ensure you have all the tools necessary to make the best decisions, particularly if it is used in conjunction with ongoing counseling or psychotherapy sessions focused on relevant issues.

Chapter 2 *Is Weight Loss Surgery Right for You?*

The following issues should be taken into account as you consider whether or not weight loss surgery is right for you.

Body Weight

Determining Your BMI

You are most likely considering weight loss surgery because you are obese. But there may be medical concerns and similar factors that will sway your decision one way or the other. You will want to consider all these factors as you think about weight loss surgery.

First, do you qualify for the diagnosis of severe obesity? This is one of the first considerations when deciding if surgery is an appropriate weight loss tool for you. Doctors use the body mass index (BMI) to categorize degrees of overweight in patients. Consult Figure 2.1 to determine your BMI, or you can calculate your BMI as follows:

$$\text{BMI} = \frac{\text{weight in kilos}}{(\text{height in meters})^2} \quad \text{OR} \quad \frac{\text{weight in pounds} \times 703}{(\text{height in inches})^2}$$