

Frequently Asked Questions

This is meant to be a guide. Always check with your doctor!



Q: Does bariatric surgery typically lead to major weight loss?

A: Yes, and No. The amount of weight loss depends on the patient. Factors such as how much weight they have to lose, and how compliant are they after surgery.

Q: How important is the patient's attitude for success of bariatric surgery?



A: Very important! The more motivated a patient is, the better the patient will do. A motivated patient manages their weight loss well and meets the requirements of dietary, behaviors and physical activity modifications as needed to be a success.

Q: You mentioned the possibility of a deep vein thrombus, and pulmonary embolism as a surgery risk, is there anything you can do to reduce those risks?

A: Yes! We have several things we do to reduce the risk of these for our patients. First, we use sequential compression devices on your legs. These devices, much like wrap around sleeves, inflate then deflate helping in moving the blood through your legs back up to the heart. These will be placed on you in the operating room, and will stay on during your hospitalization while you are in bed, or up in the chair. Secondly, we will use blood thinners to prevent clots in your lungs, or legs. Blood thinners allow the blood to flow more freely back to the heart. And lastly, is our partnership with you, the patient, this is one of the most important reasons we encourage you to get up and get moving! Getting you moving and walking as soon as possible after surgery greatly reduces your risk of these complications.

Q: If I have a hiatus hernia, can I still have bariatric surgery?

A: If you have a hiatus hernia, this will be discussed with your surgeon during your evaluation. An endoscopy may be required prior to weight loss surgery to evaluate the hernia. Based on the assessment, the hernia may need repaired. Your bariatric surgeon will work out a plan that is best for you.

Q: Why do some people lose their hair after surgery?

A: Individuals may notice their hair falling out after surgery. This is only temporary. These changes can be related to general anesthesia, change in nutrition, and change in hormone levels. It is our recommendation that you increase your protein intake. You should also be taking a multivitamin with iron.

Q: Can I get pregnant after weight loss surgery?

A: We recommend that women wait 18–24 months after surgery before getting pregnant, and recommend that you use 2 methods of birth control during that period. The body needs time to adjust after surgery, and during a time of restriction is not the time to introduce the physical demands of a pregnancy and all of its increased nutrition requirements on your body.

Q: Will I have excess skin?

A: As you start losing weight, you may notice excess skin. The amount of excess skin depends on several factors such as which procedure you have, your age, use of tobacco and your exercise routine prior to and after surgery. For some patients, the skin will tone up, in other cases; the skin has stretched too much to return to normal. Some patients may choose to have plastic surgery to have this skin removed. We do not recommend that you consider plastic surgery until 2 years after your bariatric surgery, and you have reached your weight loss goal. Plastic surgery is currently not available at Ireland Army Community Hospital.

