

## An Investigation Of The Health Risks After Bariatric Surgery

With obesity continuing to rise in the West people are becoming more and more concerned about the health risks from being substantially overweight and of the increased death risk resulting from obesity. But to what extent can these risks be lessened by undergoing weight loss surgery?

A study recently looked at the histories of a large number of people who had undergone bariatric surgery in the 10 years from the start of 1995 to the end of 2004 and discovered that roughly one percent of patients died within a year of their surgery and that just over 6 percent died inside 5 years. When the figures had been adjusted for sex and age and matched against statistics for the general population they were found to be relatively high. So what exactly does this tell us about the ability of weight loss surgery to lessen the general risk to our health?

In order to answer this particular question then we need to look beyond the headline figures and find out why these deaths occurred and where the real difference lies between the population at large and gastric bypass patients.

If you look at the detailed figures two particular things stand out.

The first is the figure for people whose deaths resulted from heart disease which is the main cause of death in the gastric bypass patients and is considerably above that seen in the general population.

The second is the figure for deaths which resulted from suicide and from drug overdoses which, although not formally categorized as suicide, must nevertheless raise the question of whether or not such overdoses were really accidents. Within the population at large you may expect to find some 2 deaths from suicide in a group of the same size as that used in the study and yet the group of patients showed no fewer than 30 suicides and drug overdoses.

If we look at these results and consider them alongside our general knowledge about people having weight loss surgery then we might possibly be able to explain this variation to a certain degree.

Although obesity surgery is frequently extremely successful it is often not performed until people are suffering from other conditions and, though surgery will cure many of these problems and lessen the risk from others, many people are still at some degree of risk following surgery. In many cases for example patients continue to be troubled by such things as high blood pressure and diabetes and it is perhaps not surprising that this section of the population remains at higher risk from heart disease.

Furthermore, while gastric bypass surgery can result in a considerable reduction in weight many patients remain heavily overweight for a considerable time following surgery and some individuals will stay that way for years to come.

Lastly, the changes in lifestyle which follow surgery can be dramatic and many people find that depression sets in the weeks and months following their surgery. It is a fact that much attention is paid to the physical affects of obesity surgery and the need for such things as a strict diet and exercise but, frequently, very little attention is paid to the psychological affects of surgery.

Only time will show whether this explanation is valid but there can be little doubt that improvements to post-operative care for gastric bypass patients could go a long way towards solving this anomaly.

### About the Author

GastricBypassFacts.info provides information on all forms of weight loss surgery from the [roux-en-y gastric bypass](#) to the [mini gastric bypass](#)

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