



START NOW.

What Is Obesity?

Obesity is a chronic disease that is often difficult to treat. Obesity is often the root of many other serious illnesses including diabetes, heart disease, sleep apnea, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, joint pain, infertility, acid reflux, and even cancer. Medical treatments such as diet, exercise, and pills fail to help keep off the weight for more than 95 percent of obese people. Yet, surgery is successful more than 80 percent of the time.

Obesity is categorized in terms of Body Mass Index, or BMI, a calculation based on a person's weight and height. Morbid obesity is defined as a BMI of 40 or greater, meaning the person is about 100 pounds overweight. Please refer to page 12 to calculate your BMI.

History of Weight Loss Surgery

Weight loss surgery has been around since the 1960s. The first gastric bypass surgery was performed by Edward Mason in 1966 at the University of Iowa. At the time, the majority of surgeries that Dr. Mason was performing were for ulcers or cancer within the stomach. During his time, he made an important observation that these patients had a difficult time maintaining their weight. That's when he decided he would take the undesirable effect of gastric resection, which was weight loss, and use it for a desirable effect, to treat obesity.

Since that time, bariatric surgery has evolved tremendously. It is now widely accepted as the most successful long-term treatment for obesity and weight-related diseases.

However, even today, there is no cure for obesity. Not even surgery. Surgery is just a tool. It can be very effective when a person is dedicated to a healthier lifestyle including better eating choices and increased physical exercise. That's also why there are choices. At Care New England, we offer three surgical treatments.

Do I Qualify for Surgery?

In order to qualify for surgery, you must meet criteria established by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). All surgeons in the United States who perform weight loss surgery must follow these guidelines, which include:

1. Having a BMI greater than 40 or greater than 35 with at least one major weight-related comorbidity
2. Age 18 years old or older
3. Demonstrated previous failed attempts at nonsurgical weight loss
4. No unstable psychiatric disorder
5. No active dependency on narcotic medications (e.g., OxyContin or methadone), alcohol, or illegal/recreational drugs
6. Must be committed to a healthier lifestyle and set realistic goals
7. Must be able to understand the risks and consent to the procedure willingly

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