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FIGHTING OBESITY



According to a study by Zurich International Life, around 47.5 percent of UAE residents are overweight and 13 percent are obese, the latter meaning they have too much body fat. Another piece of research from Global Burden of Disease Study 2013 by the University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation shows over 66 percent of men and 60 percent of women in the UAE are overweight or obese. In light of the worrying numbers, we look at how obesity is more than just a cosmetic concern as it can contribute to causing diseases and health problems.

r. Patrick Noel,
an international
leading figure in
bariatric surgery
and Laparoscopic and Bariatric
Surgeon for The
American Surgecenter, explains
all about undergoing bariatric
surgery and how this option can
help lower medical risks by helping
people slim down to stay healthy.

 Could you give us more details about bariatric surgeries?

Weight loss, or bariatric surgery, helps people lose weight and lowers their risk of medical problems associated with obesity. Bariatric surgery contributes to weight loss in two main ways: restriction and malabsorption. For restriction, surgery is used to physically limit the amount of food the stomach can hold, which limits the number of calories you can eat. While malabsorption means surgery is used to shorten or bypass part of the small intestine, which reduces the amount of calories and nutrients the body absorbs.

There are various types of bariatric surgeries that can be performed. Surgery may be performed using an "open" approach, which involves cutting open the abdomen or by means of laparoscopy, during which surgical instruments are guided into the abdomen through small half-inch incisions. Today, most bariatric surgery is laparoscopic because compared with open surgery; it requires less extensive cuts, causes relatively minimal tissue damage, leads to fewer post-operative complications and allows for earlier hospital discharge. We offer the "Rouxen-Y" gastric bypass (RYGB) and vertical sleeve gastrectomy (VSG) at The American Surgecenter. Gastric sleeve and gastric bypass surgeries are the most common weight loss operations, accounting for about 80 percent of all weight loss surgeries worldwide. The surgeon decides which surgery is best

DR NOEL'S TOP 5 TIPS TO PREVENT OBESITY

- Change your lifestyle by adapting healthy eating habits and avoid wrong diets
- Increase your daily activity level with regular exercise
- Set realistic goals regarding weight and fitness
- Be a role model yourself, people will follow your steps in your health track
- Have a scientific reference to get all your needed information regarding nutrition and exercise





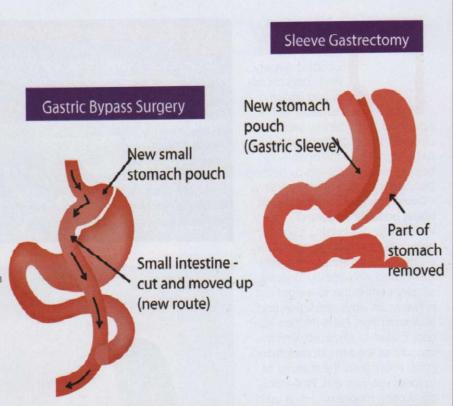
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for the patient based on several factors such as age, medical history, diet history and previous surgeries.

- Can anyone undergo this surgery? Weight loss surgery is not a quick fix option and one must meet the prescribed criteria to be a candidate for the procedure.

- What are the effects that this surgery might have on the body?

After any bariatric surgery, people typically stay in the hospital for one to two days and return to normal activity within two to three weeks. You will not be able to eat for the first one to three days, and you will only be allowed to go home once you are able to drink liquid without vomiting, move around without pain and do not need pain medicine through an IV. A post-bariatric surgery diet typically follows a staged approach designed to help you ease back into eating solid foods as you recover. Once you're able to tolerate liquids for a few days,





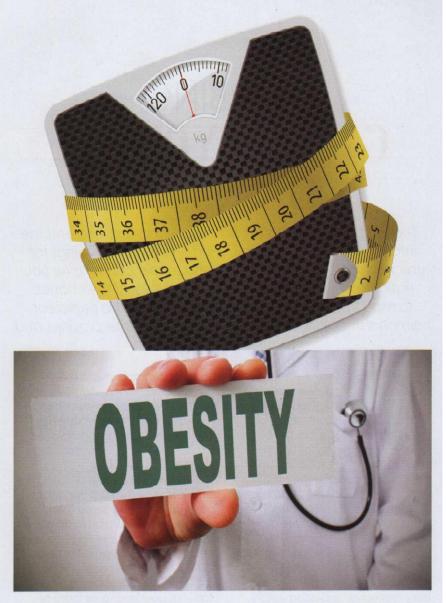
you can begin to eat strained and pureed (mashed up) foods. After a few weeks of pureed food, you can add soft foods into your diet, such as steamed vegetables or lean and ground meat. Usually three months after the surgery, you can begin a full and hoalthy diot.

Complications may include ulcers, diaestive problems, or wound infections. In addition to surgical complications, some people experience long-term deficiencies of vitamin B12, folate and iron. It is necessary to know this procedure requires life-long commitment to adherence to post-operative changes, including dietary restrictions, vitamin/mineral supplementation and medical follow-ups. Significant weight loss cannot occur or be maintained if these requirements aren't fulfilled.

OBESITY-RELATED HEALTH

If you're obese, you're more likely to develop a number of potentially serious health problems, including:

- High LDL cholesterol levels: Having a high level of low-density lipoproteins (LDL), which is known as the bad type of cholesterol, raises your risk of having heart disease. LDL carry cholesterol, a fatty substance, from your liver to the cells that need it. Too much of it in your blood can cause fatty material to build up in your artery walls. Things are even riskier if you have a high LDL level and a low amount of high-density lipoprotein, the good cholesterol known as HDL.
- Type 2 diabetes: Obesity is considered to be one of the most important factors in the advance of insulin resistance. And by making cells more resilient to the effects of insulin, being overweight or obese can lead to you having type 2 diabetes.
- High blood pressure: High blood pressure or hypertension, a major risk factor for heart disease, tends to increase with weight gain and age. It's unclear why obesity is a major cause of high blood pressure, however, research has shown obese patients displayed an increase in blood



volume and arterial resistance.

- Heart disease and strokes: According to the American Heart Association, obesity is a big cause for developing coronary heart disease, which can lead to a heart attack or stroke. Being obese can cause artery blockage due to fat build up in artery walls, which prevents blood supply to the brain, resulting in a stroke.
- Cancer: A study by the American Heart Association found being overweight increases your chances for developing cancer by 50 percent. Women have a higher risk of developing cancer if they are overweight.
- Gallstones: Being extremely overweight increases the danger of developing gallstones, especially

in women. Gallstones are caused when the liver releases excessive amounts of bile, which is stored in the gallbladder.

- Gynaecological problems: Obesity can create changes in the hormonal levels of women, as our bodies need to be at an appropriate weight to produce the right amount of hormones and regulate ovulation and menstruation. So if you are overweight, you have a higher chance of suffering from infertility and ovarian cancer.
- Back pain: Excess weight, especially in the abdominal area, can put strain on one of your body's most vulnerable parts, the spine. Lower back pain is especially common in women who are obese.