

Continuing my series on weight loss, I would like to discuss weight loss surgery, medically known as bariatric surgery. This type of surgery typically involves altering the shape of the stomach in order to reduce its volume. There is nothing magical about how this works. The smaller the size of the stomach, the less food it can hold. So essentially, bariatric surgery forces you to eat less. That's it in a nutshell.

Because of the significant risks involved from infection and surgical complications, it is recommended that this surgery only be used for very obese people. Not all surgeons stick to these guidelines, so it is important if you are considering this type of surgery that you do your homework.

The point that I would like to make in this article is that this surgery does nothing that you couldn't do on your own without the surgery. Weight is lost because the amount of food that can be eaten is far less than what could be eaten before the surgery. Many people who overeat do so because food is a source of comfort and pleasure. Those issues do not go away following surgery.

In order for surgery to be successful, it requires a major lifestyle change. If you don't change your lifestyle, even surgery will fail to keep the weight off. Many individuals who have had bariatric surgery find themselves obese several years later. Even though the stomach size may be much smaller after the surgery, it is still possible to eat an entire pack of cookies or a carton of ice cream during the course of a day.

If you are considering surgery, I would suggest that you try to adopt the recommended lifestyle changes before you have surgery. If you have a friend who has done it, talk to them about what they have had to change and how they eat. Use the internet to find post surgery diet recommendations. By attempting this process, you can get a feel for whether or not you will be able to stick to the program after surgery and some of you may even be able to lose the weight without surgery simply by adopting those same lifestyle guidelines.

Next week I will discuss some looming new concerns over bariatric surgery and other weight loss programs.