

Are you having further surgery after WLS?

After gastric bypass, many people still have to undergo further operations in their lives.

Recently I was asked for advice and it occurred to me that it would be helpful to generally outline what would be useful for anyone approaching surgery in a public or private hospital.

First of all, make sure that your surgeon knows that you have had a gastric bypass and that he/she understands what this involves. If you are having abdominal surgery, show him/her the copy of the operation note you were given to take home with you.

Most operations involve some pain, and the commonest pain relief agents are the anti-inflammatories, which do cause ulcers if they are not taken in conjunction with anti-ulcer medications such as Losec (Omeprazole). It is better that they are given as a suppository rather than a tablet, if this is possible.

Unfortunately, most hospitals also do not understand what a high protein/low simple carbohydrate diet looks like and it is better to assume that you may have to take your own protein shakes or bars to ensure that your diet continues to be healthy whilst in hospital. Do not assume that because they give you a food, it is safe for you to have. Many patients have reported being given ice-cream and full sugar stewed fruit!

If the operation does involve lying around for a long time in a bed, constipation can be an issue. It is good to take your own Benefibre and alpine tea with you and be prepared to use this as soon as possible after the operation.

From a more holistic viewpoint, operations do involve pain, stress and disruption of normal life. The brain's normal response to this in the past was to eat tasty foods, so these situations can become a point when people can start to regain weight. For this reason, it is good to go into the procedure with a plan to combat boredom, demotivation, and the totally normal temptation to comfort eat. Recruit some support people for this.

Surgery also causes the release of chemicals that tell your brain that you are injured and must not do any activity. Whilst you must follow your surgeon's instructions, as soon as you can, you should get back into being active again, even though you don't feel like it. Just because one limb has been operated on doesn't mean that exercise in the other three limbs can't continue in some form. If you are wondering how to get around the situation, you can call our personal trainer at the rooms to get advice.

Being off work is also a good time to review what you have learned at the Retreat and/or during your sessions with our Psychologists, and start putting it back into practice again.

It is also a good idea to let the clinic know what is happening just in case there are any special things that we think your surgeon should know. If you do have any other questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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