

No Cure for Obesity

But the surgery isn't for everyone. Like any major surgery, ~~there are~~ it has risks. Although bariatric surgery is much safer today than it was 10 years ago, 1 in every 200 patients ~~still~~ die from ~~the surgery as it can cause~~ complications such as blood clots, hernias, or bowel obstructions. Patients can also ~~end up back in the hospital to repair~~ develop intestinal leaks that can lead to serious infection if not repaired. [26UN3]

Smith ~~has had a host of complications that have landed her back in the hospital~~. A few months after her surgery, she felt terrible cramping in her side. Tests showed that scar tissue had formed at the site where her small intestine had been cut from her stomach. Surgery to remove the tissue ~~showed~~ revealed that parts of her intestine and stomach had twisted and anchored onto this scar tissue, which was partly what was causing her pain. Soon after the scar tissue was removed and her stomach and intestines ~~put~~ back in place, she was still having terrible stomach pains after eating. ~~In addition to a feeding tube to her stomach, Dr.~~ doctors decided to insert a feeding tube into her stomach, as well as a catheter into a vein in her arm through which she could ~~take in~~ absorb nutrients directly into her bloodstream. Smith spent weeks in and out of the hospital between January and April of 2010. But she has had no additional complications since.

Comment [TW1]: AU: Please provide first name for Smith. "Amy Jo"?

However, she may ~~still~~ suffer health issues over time. ~~Since~~ Because people who have gastric bypass surgery (as opposed to gastric banding) ~~end up with~~ have part of the small intestine bypassed, they absorb fewer of the micronutrients they eat. Patients must take ~~such vitamin~~ supplements, such as iron, folate, vitamin B₁₂, and calcium, for the rest of their lives. There may be additional micronutrient deficiencies that scientists haven't yet recognized. Only long-term follow-up of these patients will reveal how serious ~~of a problem this~~ this problem is. To monitor her micronutrient levels, Smith has a blood test every 3 months.

Comment [TW2]: AU: OK to delete "vitamin"? Iron and calcium are minerals, not vitamins.

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~~What's more~~ Furthermore, the surgery is not a permanent cure for obesity. As statistics show, most people who have the surgery regain various amounts of weight over time. This is because appetite is controlled by a complicated interaction between the digestive system and the brain. ~~While~~ Although surgery may reduce the size of the stomach, it doesn't alter the desire to eat, which is controlled by chemical signals in the brain. ~~While~~ Scientists are still studying the dynamics of appetite control, but they do know that if people do not exercise control over their diet and lifestyle, they can regain significant amounts of weight even ~~people who if they~~ have had surgery, can regain significant amounts of weight.

Comment [TW3]: AU: Do you mean here that different people gain different amounts of weight, or that a single person can gain weight multiple times in different amounts?

Although the stomach pouch may stretch over time, it can never be as large as it was before gastric surgery. Most patients never weigh as much as they did before the surgery. More importantly, the ~~Swedish study~~ showed for the first time that long-term weight loss for the morbidly obese, even when ~~people they~~ remain overweight, is enough to save lives. [Pull Quote 3]

Comment [TW4]: AU: This is the first mention of this study. Please provide descriptive information.

The surgery, however, is a drastic measure, as Smith's case shows. She still struggles with nausea every day, and strong smells can ~~cause her to~~ make her vomit. ~~She also feels~~