

Tips To Take Home

Just a few thoughts to keep in mind after your surgery

--Don't be upset if your doctor recommends loosening the band. Says Dr. Marc Paya, a Los Angeles-based LAP-BAND® surgeon: "I tell my patients the exact reasons why we're doing it. Sometimes if it's too tight the pouch of the band can dilate and can literally turn into a whole new stomach. It can become bad for the system and backfire on the results you want. You have to trust your doctor is thinking about your body getting long-term results."

--Loose skin after surgery can make it hard to look as svelte as you'd like. Referred to as "melting syndrome," there is relief. From wearing a body shaping line such as Spanx under clothes to a tight tank top, it's easy to create a slimmer appearance. But Contoräkes warns against overdoing it for those who sweat. "Nylon tank tops can get very hot so even though you'll look slimming, sweating isn't a good look either."

--Surgery may allow men to finally get that fitted dress shirt, but because some areas will lose weight faster than others take extra time in the mirror for both front and back. Also, don't be afraid to work with your tailor or even occasionally go custom-made. "The most important thing is to try on a lot of different sizes," says Maria Contoräkes, a Miami-based wardrobe stylist. "But it has to be comfortable, not just look good, or you'll never wear it."

--You deserve a reward so why not get a new look to go along with that new body. For women, consider that hairstyle you've been putting off. Maybe you always wanted shorter but felt your face shape wouldn't accommodate. Now's the time to revisit the thought. For men, sunglasses can provide that perfect extra to your style. Two keys are to make sure they have strong UV protection and that they properly fit your face. A good way to protect against the latter is to check out this link to a face sizing chart (<http://www.thesunglasshouse.com/sizechart.html>).

--Even though the people in your life may know about the banding, you may decide you want a clean slate with everyone you've never met. That's your choice and you're allowed. The best ways to avoid surgery talk at social events range from asking for the vegetarian plate to mentioning you had already eaten a large meal if someone inquires about your portion size. What they don't know won't hurt them!

--Though you can have a strong amount of control and support at home, the workplace can be a far different scenario. From a birthday cake being rolled out seemingly every week to a vending machine calling your name, it takes a certain willpower to win out. Paya believes you have to constantly remind yourself of what you have to lose. "I tell my patients they've gone through so much to make themselves healthier," Paya says. "Let your co-workers eat it because it doesn't affect them but it will affect you."