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Bariatric Surgery May Help Reduce Asthma Exacerbations

Obese asthma patients had half as many ER visits, hospitalizations after surgery

FRIDAY, March 20, 2015 (HealthDay News) -- Bariatric surgery cuts the risk of an emergency department visit or hospitalization for asthma exacerbation in obese patients by half, according to a study published online Feb. 7 in the *Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology*.

Kohei Hasegawa, M.D., M.P.H., from Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, and colleagues compared the risk of patients' asthma exacerbation during sequential 12-month periods using presurgery months 13 to 24 as the reference period. Data from a population-based emergency department and inpatient sample in three states (California, Florida, and Nebraska) were evaluated for 2,261 obese patients with asthma (aged 18 to 54 years) who underwent bariatric surgery.

The researchers found that during the reference period, 22 percent of patients had an emergency department visit or hospitalization for asthma exacerbation, whereas significantly fewer emergency department visits or hospitalizations for asthma exacerbation occurred within 12 months after bariatric surgery (10.9 percent; odds ratio, 0.42). The risk remained significantly lower in the subsequent period of 13 to 24 months after bariatric surgery (10.9 percent; odds ratio, 0.42).

"This reduction suggests the effectiveness of significant weight loss on asthma morbidity," the authors write.

One author disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

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