



**Registered Dietitians**  
Department of  
Veterans Affairs  
*Leading the way to better health*

# Is This Surgery For You?

After someone tries other weight loss methods, bariatric surgery may be the next step for people who remain severely obese, or for people who have an obesity-related disease.

## Candidates for this surgery have:

- a BMI (body mass index) of 40 or more
- a life-threatening obesity-related health problem such as diabetes, severe sleep apnea, or heart disease and a BMI of 35 or more
- obesity-related physical problems that interfere with employment, walking, or family function.

## Is it for you?

If you have one of the above conditions, answer the following questions. The answers to these questions may help you decide whether weight-loss surgery is right for you.

- Are you aware that this surgery can have serious complications?
- Are you aware that you will be restricted as to what you can eat?
- Are you aware that sometimes the surgery fails?
- Are you well informed about the surgery and the effects of treatment?
- Are you determined to lose weight and improve your health?
- Are you aware of how your life may change after the operation?
- Can you adjust to the fact that you will need to chew your food well and be unable to eat large meals?

## Remember:

The lifestyle changes you'll need to make after your surgery are very much like the ones you would make with a standard diet and exercise program.

Ask yourself:

- Are you likely to lose weight successfully with diet and exercise?
- Are you committed to lifelong medical follow-up?

There is no guarantee you will lose weight and maintain the weight loss. Success is possible only when you follow your treatment plan and make changes in your behaviors. You will also need medical follow-up. This commitment must be carried out for the rest of your life.

**Contact your local VA Dietitian for more information.**