

## Gastric Bypass

The gastric bypass is the original weight loss surgery. During this procedure a small pouch about the size of a golf ball is created out of the top of the stomach. The remaining stomach stays in place but has not contact with food. The intestines are divided, and the distal end of the intestine is hooked to the pouch while the proximal end is reattached to the intestine. The digestive juices made by the pancreas are unable to mix with the food till it travels through about 1/3 of the intestine. Since we cannot absorb undigested food, this portion of the intestine is “bypassed”.

The gastric bypass predicts 5-10% more weight loss than a sleeve gastrectomy but is associated with more complications. For some patients who need to lose more weight, this is an acceptable trade off. Similar to the sleeve gastrectomy, similar hormonal changes are seen, making this a “metabolic” surgery and not just a purely restrictive procedure.

After the bypass, your eating habits will have to change. A side effect of the bypass is dumping syndrome which occurs when too many carbohydrates are encountered. This means you will have to abide by a low carbohydrate diet and avoid sugar. Dumping syndrome occurs on a spectrum and can be quite severe and life changing resulting in being able to consume only protein shakes the rest of a patient’s life or it may not occur at all. Because, dumping syndrome is variable, it is difficult to predict how severe each patient will experience it.

Long term risks of a gastric bypass include ulcer formation, internal hernia, and malnutrition. Due to these risks it is important that you are committed to long term follow up which may require further surgery. Certain medications will need to be avoided in the future including over the counter pain medications, steroids, and nicotine as these are well associated with severe long-term complications. In addition, commitment to diet and taking nutritional supplementation is necessary.

If your ready to start living healthier and getting the weight off, call to set up a consultation for gastric bypass surgery!