

Which Psychological Factors Predict Successful Outcomes after Bariatric Surgery for Patients With Obesity? A Longitudinal Assessment

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Abstract

Background: Morbid obesity affects between 2 to 6 percent of Canadians and is a serious health concern. At present, bariatric surgery is the most effective treatment available for long-term weight management and is known to produce both significant weight loss and improvement in psychosocial functioning. Not all patients undergoing bariatric surgery are successful, however, and it may be that certain psychological characteristics modulate either positive or negative outcomes. **Objective:** The purpose of our study will be to investigate if certain psychological factors can be identified as being predictive of patients who will be unsuccessful following bariatric surgery. **Methods:** We will administer a structured, comprehensive battery of psychological screening tools to between 300 to 400 patients seeking bariatric surgery at St. Joseph's Healthcare, Hamilton. Patients will be given the questionnaires prior to surgery and then asked to complete the same questionnaires at yearly intervals post-surgery up to 5 years. We will also obtain information regarding weight-loss achieved, dietary compliance and post-operative complications and link these outcomes to the psychological results. The outcomes of this study will allow us to identify if there are any psychological characteristics of patients that predict successful weight-loss after surgery, and if there are certain patient profiles that confer vulnerability to new or worsening mental illness. **Conclusion:** The findings from this study will assist the larger scientific community to increase the proportion of patients achieving successful outcomes after bariatric surgery and determine if these outcomes, such as durability of weight loss, are maintained over time.