

# Weight-loss surgery successful in treating overweight adolescents

March 4 2011

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"Bariatric surgery" refers to several different surgical procedures designed to assist weight loss by limiting the amount of food someone eats or the amount they absorb during digestion. It has been used for several years to treat obesity in adults. A new study published in the journal *Clinical Obesity* reveals that bariatric surgery can result in significant weight loss in severely obese adolescents.

Led by Ange Aikenhead of the International Association for the Study of Obesity in London, England, researchers searched various databases for articles examining subjects less than 19 years of age reporting at least one postoperative [weight loss](#) measure and at least one year of postoperative follow-up.

Thirty-seven relevant papers on bariatric surgery effectiveness in 831 [children](#) or adolescents were included, spanning 36 years. Thirteen studies examined gastric banding, with mean BMI reductions ranging from 8.5 to 43 kg/m<sup>2</sup>. [Weight gain](#) was reported in three studies. Three surgery-related mortalities were reported, and a range of postoperative complications were identified across surgery types. The majority of studies reported resolution or improvement of other conditions affecting the patients.

The existing evidence suggests that bariatric surgery in older children results in significant weight loss and improvements in comorbidities and quality of life.

"The [obesity epidemic](#) now affects children as well as adults, with obesity and its associated morbidities and costs increasing in scale," Aikenhead notes. "Establishing effective methods for treating severe obesity in children will not only reduce the prevalence of childhood obesity and related ill health, but inhibit the progression of obese children to obese adults, a crucial step in combating the epidemic."

Provided by Wiley

Citation: Weight-loss surgery successful in treating overweight adolescents (2011, March 4) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2011-03-weight-loss-surgery-successful-overweight-adolescents.html>

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