

Weight-loss surgery has low complication rates, study finds

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New research suggests gastric bypass as safe as appendix or gallbladder removal.

(HealthDay)—People with type 2 diabetes who undergo a weight-loss procedure called laparoscopic gastric bypass surgery have a low risk for complications or death, according to a new study.

The study was scheduled for presentation Thursday at the annual meeting of the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery, in Boston, and has also been published online in the journal *Diabetes, Obesity and Metabolism*.

"The perception has been that [gastric bypass](#) is a very risky operation, but the reality is, it is as safe, if not safer, than many of the most commonly performed surgeries in America," study co-author Dr. Ali Aminian, a clinical scholar of advanced metabolic and diabetes surgery

at Cleveland Clinic, said in a meeting news release.

"The risk-to-benefit ratio of gastric bypass for diabetes and obesity is very favorable. There's significant weight loss, diabetes improvement or remission, and a relatively low complication and mortality rate," Aminian said.

"In addition, earlier intervention with metabolic surgery may eliminate the need for some later higher-risk procedures to treat cardiovascular complications of diabetes," Aminian added.

The gastric bypass procedure shrinks the size of the stomach and enables food to bypass part of the small intestine, reducing the amount of food a person can eat at one time and also limiting the absorption of food.

Previous research has shown that gastric bypass can have benefits for diabetes patients within hours or days. In some cases, patients no longer require [diabetes medications](#) when they leave the hospital, the study authors said in the news release.

Laparoscopic gastric bypass was once considered a high-risk procedure, but this study finds that it is now as safe as common operations, such as gallbladder surgery, appendix removal and knee replacement.

The researchers at the Cleveland Clinic Bariatric and Metabolic Institute analyzed data from more than 16,500 patients with [type 2 diabetes](#) who had laparoscopic gastric bypass, and almost 67,000 [diabetes](#) patients who had a number of other types of surgeries.

The investigators found that the 30-day complication rate for gastric bypass patients was 3.4 percent, about the same as laparoscopic gallbladder surgery and hysterectomy. The 30-day death rate for gastric bypass patients was 0.30 percent, about the same as total knee

replacement and one-tenth that of heart surgery.

More studies on the long-term effects of laparoscopic [gastric bypass surgery](#) in [diabetes patients](#) are needed, the researchers noted.

More information: The U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality has more about [diabetes and weight-loss surgery](#).

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