Prior bariatric surgery may protect against severe COVID-19 outcomes

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(HealthDay)—Bariatric surgery may protect against severe COVID-19

infection and death for patients with morbid obesity, according to a study published in the November issue of *Surgery for Obesity and Related Diseases*.

Megan Jenkins, M.D., from NYU Langone Health in New York City, and colleagues examined if prior bariatric surgery correlated with an increased risk for hospitalization and outcome severity after COVID-19 infection. The analysis included a cohort identified from a single institution of 124 COVID-19-positive patients with a history of bariatric surgery and a control cohort of 496 COVID-19-positive patients who were eligible for bariatric surgery (body mass index ≥40 kg/m^2 or body mass index ≥35 kg/m^2 with a comorbidity at the time of COVID-19 diagnosis).

The researchers found that patients with a history of bariatric surgery were less likely to be admitted through the emergency department (unadjusted odds ratio [uOR], 0.39), were less likely to require a ventilator during the admission (uOR, 0.42), had a shorter length of stay in both the intensive care unit and overall (uOR, 0.44), and were less likely to be deceased at discharge versus the control group (uOR, 0.42).

"Our results emphasize the importance of bariatric surgery as a protective factor against severe COVID-19 infection and death in the high-risk population with obesity and [that] independently decreases the risk of hospitalization," the authors write.

More information: Abstract/Full Text