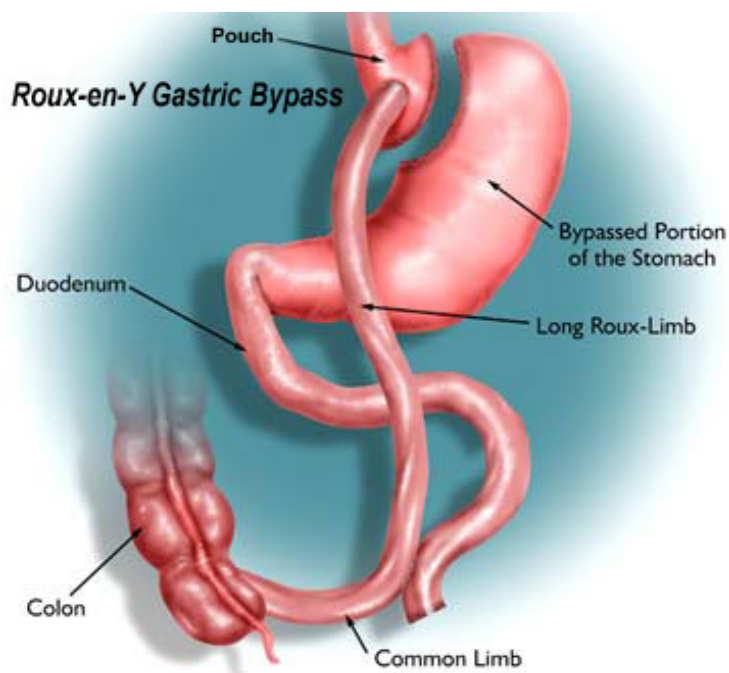
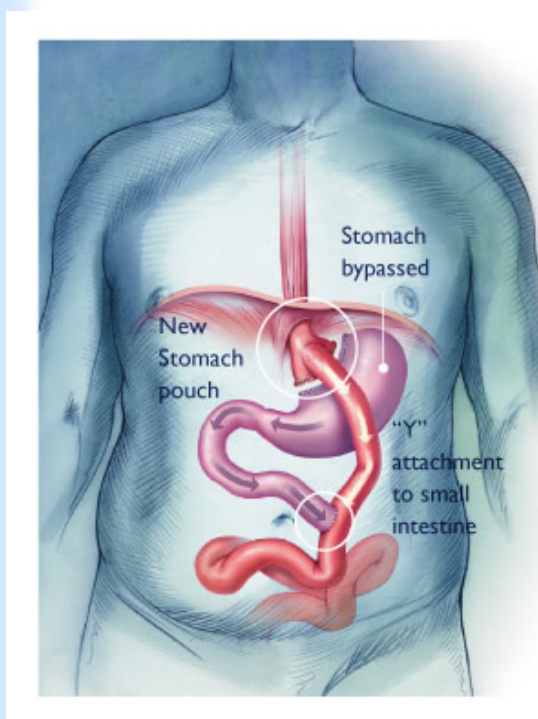




Roux en Y (RNY) Gastric Bypass

The RNY gastric bypass is an excellent surgery for those who need to lose 5 stone or more, and need results quickly. It was my choice of surgery because it is more effective for my needs than the band, and yet not as drastic as the DS procedure.



The operation consists of a division of the stomach to form a new pouch, and then a bypass of 1 1/2 - 2 metres of bowel to prevent the natural absorption of food. The small intestine is carefully measured and cut. One end is connected to the small stomach pouch. The other end is reconnected to the small intestine, forming a "Y".

The stomach is left in place and gastric juices still flow through the duodenum as before, however the passage of food is re-routed post op.

Many obesity experts consider the surgery to be the "Gold Standard" of modern obesity surgery, the benchmark to which other bariatric operations are compared.

The new pouch is about the size of an egg and as such severely restricts the intake of food volume. The hunger receptor nerves are bypassed so you just don't get hungry anymore, but more of a sensation that you need to eat something. The 'fullness' sensation is experienced very quickly because these receptors are around the top of the pouch. It's incredible how soon you feel the need to stop eating, and you cannot believe that after so little, you feel so full.

The Roux-en-y Gastric Bypass is an excellent tool for achieving long-term control of morbid obesity. Weight loss of 9-11 stone is the achievable weight loss in the first year. When your BMI reaches a healthy 20-27, the pouch stretches to allow a bigger volume of food to be consumed. This allows weight to be maintained at a healthy level without overshooting the weight loss. It is rare for this not to happen, but occasionally it can. A stretched pouch can happen before all the excess weight is lost and this can make losing the last few pounds more tricky. You can control

what happens to your pouch though, and preventing stretching of the pouch by not overeating when your body tells you to stop is the best way.

Pouch Rules

1. **Avoid fizzy drinks** which stretch the pouch with it's gases.
2. **Avoid bulky foods** which also push the stomach walls out.
3. **Listen to what your body is telling you it needs.** Head hunger is a major contributor to a delay in weight loss - where your body is telling you to stop but your head is pushing you to carry on eating. You are unlikely to experience 'hunger' as you did before because the enzyme in the main (and now bypassed) part of the stomach which causes the growling hunger pangs is now no longer being stimulated. You can experience a sensation of discomfort though which is about as close to 'hunger pangs' as you will get post op. This sensation though can also mean that you are thirsty and a drink will stop this sensation quickly enough.
4. **Avoid eating and drinking at the same time** because the fluids will a) fill you up faster than the food b) will pass the food from your stomach to the lower part of the intestine too quickly for you to absorb any nutrients.
5. **Drink 2 litres of fluid a day.** Try to make the majority of this intake water. Tea and Coffee, juice etc also count as part of the intake count but water is the best because it does not carry any caffeine.

How and why you lose weight with this surgery

The Roux-en-Y Gastric Bypass Surgery helps you lose weight in three ways...

1. You eat less (Volume restriction)

With a separate small stomach pouch, you feel full after eating a small amount of food. You will be physically unable to over eat because your pouch will become so uncomfortable that you may in fact vomit. The desire to overeat may still be present though and post op patients call this 'head hunger' where your brain is forcing old habits on you whereas your body is telling you that it has had enough food. In time and with self discipline you can retrain your head to accept that you are full on very little.

2. Your appetite changes (Behaviour modification)

The procedure reinforces a change in your eating habits. After the procedure, most patients find that their body will not easily tolerate foods that are high in refined sugars and fats. With this built-in control, called "the dumping syndrome," which produces short-term discomfort, you naturally learn to avoid these foods. However, not all patients experience Dumping Syndrome - it seems very varied between surgeons.

3. You absorb fewer calories (Malabsorption)

Food bypasses part of the small intestine and digestion occurs in the lower part of the small intestine. These two factors reduce the amount of calories your body absorbs from the food you eat.

The reduced stomach pouch size, change in eating habits and absorption of fewer calories allow patients to be successful at long-term weight loss, as opposed to short term weight loss programs or diets that rely on willpower,

costly meal replacements, or dietary supplements. The statistics show that only 1 in 100 slimmers attending classes alone will succeed in achieving and maintaining their weight loss goal. 99 of them will fail to meet the goal or keep the weight off. With the gastric bypass, once you have mastered the head hunger, and learnt to listen when your body says no to sugary foods, high fat foods and simply too much food, then you will have this obesity disease beaten.

Nutritional Information

The gastric bypass diet is designed to bring about significant weight loss.

Learning new eating habits and following the diet correctly will help to maintain this weight loss over time.

In general, the gastric bypass diet includes foods that are high in protein, and low in fat, fibre, calories, and sugar. Important vitamins and minerals are provided as supplements.

Protein is the nutrient that the body uses to build new tissue.

It is important to get enough protein right after surgery, to make sure that wounds heal properly.

Over the long term, protein in the diet will help preserve muscle tissue, so that weight can be lost as fat instead.

Foods like lean red meat or pork, chicken or turkey without the skin, fish of almost any type, eggs, and cottage cheese are high in protein and low in fat.

The gastric bypass diet is low in sweet and sugary foods for three reasons.

(Sugary foods include sweets, biscuits, ice cream, milkshakes, fizzy drinks, sweetened juices and most desserts.)

1. These foods are high in calories and fat. Even in small amounts, they could make weight loss difficult.

2. Eating sweet or sugary foods promotes "dumping syndrome," a reaction which can occur after the gastric bypass operation. Experiencing the unpleasant symptoms of dumping may limit the desire to eat sweet foods.

3. Most sweet and sugary foods don't provide many vitamins or minerals for the calories they take up; and since calories are so limited on the gastric bypass diet, it is important that every food contribute its fair share of nutrients.

Fat may be difficult to digest after gastric bypass surgery. Too much fat delays emptying of the stomach and may cause reflux, (a back up of stomach acid and food into the oesophagus that causes heartburn).

Fat may also cause extreme nausea, diarrhoea, or stomach discomfort. High-fat, fried foods and fatty meats are common offenders.

Fibre, found in foods like bran, popcorn, raw vegetables, and dried beans, is also limited on the gastric bypass diet.

There is less space in the stomach to hold these bulky foods, and less gastric acid available to digest them. Some kinds of fibre could get stuck in the pouch itself, or block the narrow opening into the small intestine.

You should not take any laxatives without the advice of a Doctor.

Vitamins & Minerals are an important part of the gastric bypass diet.

Since the diet allows only small amounts of a limited variety of foods, it may be difficult to get enough vitamins and minerals from food alone. Deficiencies can develop in a matter of months.

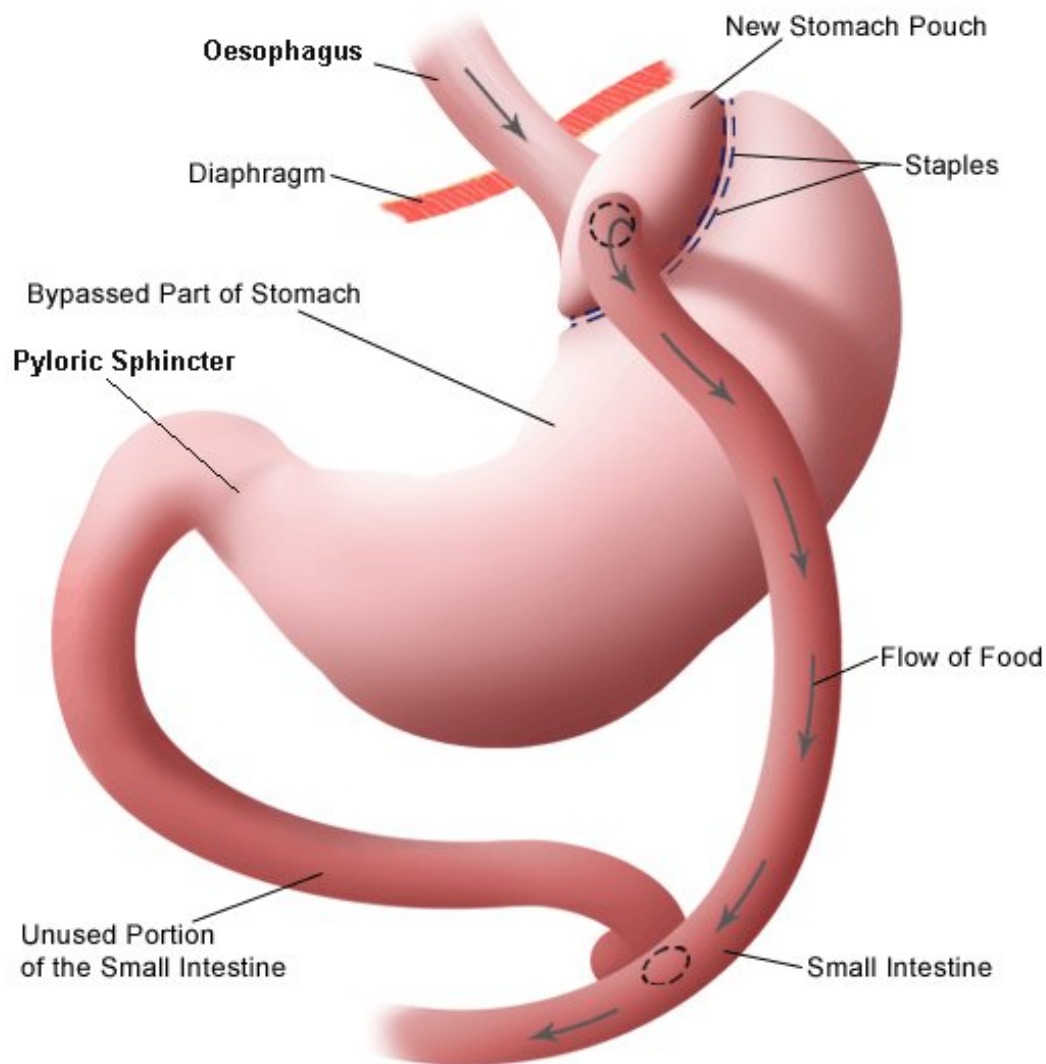
Iron, folate, vitamin B-12, and calcium are the nutrients most affected.

Most surgeons require their gastric bypass patients to take a multivitamin / mineral supplement as an ongoing daily habit for the rest of your life.

Dumping Syndrome

Dumping Syndrome occurs when food passes too quickly from the stomach into the small intestine. Because the pyloric sphincter is bypassed, the body is unable to regulate the release of sugary foods into the system, and thus adapt the body's natural insulin levels to counteract it.

Roux-en-Y Type of Gastric Bypass Procedure



When sugary foods are consumed, they pass through the bypass and into the lower part of the bowel. When the body senses there is a large amount of sugar suddenly in the lower bowel, it 'dumps' a supply of natural insulin into the system to counteract the sugar. This gives you all the symptoms of a hypoglycaemic event. Sweating, faintness, palpitations, nausea, vomiting, incoherence, feelings of panic, lethargy, bloatedness, diarrhoea are all common symptoms of dumping syndrome, to a lesser to fuller degree depending on the amount of sugar consumed. There is nothing you can do to make it stop any sooner, you just have to sit it out and wait until it passes. It can be half an hour or so and then it goes as suddenly as it comes. There is no better incentive not to have sugary substances than this horrid feeling.

I wear a medi alert bracelet in case I dump on something and am unable to tell someone in time what is happening. You become much more self-aware post-op though, and you will know what foods will push you over the top and you soon learn to avoid them. Sometimes a food or drink will take you off guard though, and you will soon sense what is happening and hopefully alert someone close by to you as to what is happening. It can be scary but it will pass, and you will soon feel better again.

RNY Pros and Cons

As with any bariatric surgery, the RNY carries a list of Pro's and Con's which you need to be aware of before you take the plunge.

Pro's

1. **Rapid weight loss** which is sustainable once your excess weight is lost
2. **Suitable surgery** for those who need to lose **5 stone or more**
3. **Control is gained** over sugary food consumption because of the dumping syndrome experienced with excessive intake of these types of foods.
4. **The surgery is totally reversible** because none of the intestine or stomach is physically removed. If complications arise at any time following the procedure a skilled surgeon can reattach all the bypassed organs and you will be back to having a 'normal' digestive system again.

Con's

1. **Dumping Syndrome** (follow the link for a more detailed description of this)
2. Rapid weight loss can cause **more skin sagging** although this can be argued that you will have the same sagging no matter how fast you lose the weight.
3. A feeling of **loss of control** over quantities consumed, although this is also probably a 'pro'.
4. **Constipation** - Many RNY patients experience extreme constipation following the procedure. Laxatives are frequently needed to prevent this.
5. **Vitamin supplements needed** for the rest of your life. Possibly injections of Vitamin B12 also needed depending on the length of the bypass and your ability to absorb it via your oral intake.
6. **Six monthly blood tests** for the rest of your life to make sure that you are nutritionally healthy.

The Gastric Bypass Eating Plan

The gastric bypass diet unfolds in several stages, from "liquids only" to small meals of soft, high-protein foods. Meals on the new menu will be much smaller than normal, and the foods eaten must be very smooth in texture. On all stages of the diet, it is especially important to drink enough water, and to take vitamin and mineral supplements as prescribed.

The stages of the eating plan

1. **Clear Liquids** -- The first stage of the gastric bypass diet, clear liquids (meaning beverages that you can almost see through), usually lasts for a day or two after the operation. The clear liquid diet starts with sips of water, and then allows foods like, the, coffee, sugar-free juice, milk, yoghurt.
2. **Soft/Purée Diet** -- The Doctor will indicate when it is time to advance to the soft or purée diet. Some patients are able to start this diet after a couple of days, others may need to wait longer. The purée diet includes very soft, high-protein foods like scrambled egg, low-fat cheese or cottage cheese, or blended lean meats like tuna fish, chicken, or pork.
It is important to make sure that all foods are puréed or extremely soft and smooth in texture. Remember that your pouch is akin to that of a weaning baby's stomach. Treat it to bland foods to begin with and as you feel able, add flavours and textures gradually and slowly. It's a steep learning curve and you should expect to feel nausea at times when something new has been consumed. Don't worry, this is normal and will pass.
3. **Regular Diet** -- The regular diet starts about 4 weeks or later after gastric bypass surgery. While this diet includes all food groups, it is important to start with high-protein foods, like lean meats or milk, at every meal. Each meal or snack should be small, with liquids consumed in between meals but not at the same time as eating.

The ABC's of Eating Right

In all stages of the gastric bypass eating plan, the way to eat is just as important as what to eat. Things to remember:

- * The new stomach can only hold 1/2 cup at a time
- * Eat 3 to 6 small meals a day
- * Chew food thoroughly and eat slowly
- * Avoid chewing gum - it could block the stomach outlet if swallowed
- * Avoid Fizzy drinks - they stretch your pouch out with gas
- * Do not overeat_
- * Relax and enjoy your new life !