

# Calgary Adult Bariatric Surgery Clinic Guidebook



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Hours: 8:00 am - 4:00 pm Monday to Friday

We acknowledge we meet at the traditional meeting place and home for many Indigenous peoples, including the Blackfoot, Stoney Nakoda, Tsuu'tina, Piikani, Cree, Dene, Inuit and Métis peoples, as identified in Treaty 7, and Métis Region 3 territory.

The information in this booklet is to be used for informational purposes only. It is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Please contact your health care provider for advice about a specific medical condition.

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This patient guidebook has been prepared by Calgary Adult Bariatric Surgery Clinic.

## Contact

For more information, please visit:

[ahs.ca/calbariatricappt](https://ahs.ca/calbariatricappt)

# The Calgary Adult Bariatric Surgery Clinic

Welcome to the Calgary Adult Bariatric Surgery Clinic (CABSC). This booklet will guide you through the CABSC program. Read it carefully and refer to it often as you move through the program.

## Bariatrics

Bariatrics is a branch of healthcare that specializes in the causes, prevention, and treatment of obesity.

## Mission Statement

CABSC is an Alberta Health Services referral program that addresses obesity through bariatric surgery, education and interdisciplinary support to help reduce chronic disease and improve overall quality of life.

## Education

The CABSC team will provide you with education, resources and support. You must use the education, resources and support to make the lifestyle changes required for safe and positive bariatric surgery outcomes. This requires time, commitment and completing set goals.

## Appointments

CABSC appointments take place at Richmond Road Diagnostic & Treatment Centre, virtually via zoom or by telephone. Some medical appointments may take place at other AHS locations. Please note the location of your appointment.

Appointment dates and times may change due to unforeseen circumstances. We will provide you with as much notice as possible when this occurs.

## Attendance Protocol

- If you miss two (2) appointments or classes, either in-person, virtual or telephone, you will be discharged from the program.
- An appointment or class cancelled with less than 48 hours' notice will be considered a missed appointment.
- If you are sick, or something unexpected comes up, call and cancel your appointment as soon as possible (403-955-8088). This would be an excused absence and not count as a missed appointment. The CABSC clerks will provide you with rescheduling options.
- If you are late or unprepared for your appointment you may be asked to reschedule.

- You are required to attend an appointment at least every 3 months once you complete your assessment with a Registered Nurse. Time between appointments is time to review the resources provided and work on achieving the goals you set with your CABSC team.
- If you have not had contact with the program for six (6) months, you will be discharged.
- If you are unable to participate in and meet the CABSC program requirements, you will be discharged and can be referred again at a later date.

**There is no guarantee you will be a candidate for bariatric surgery. Assessing safety for surgery and your understanding of how the surgery will affect your life is our primary concern. Assessment is ongoing, and surgical candidacy can change at any time.**

## About Bariatric Surgery

Many organizations, including the Canadian Medical Association and the World Health Organization, classify obesity as a chronic disease. The goal of bariatric surgery is to help you manage obesity, manage other chronic diseases such as diabetes or hypertension, achieve better health, and improve your overall quality of life.

Average weight loss following surgery is typically 20-30% of your highest adult weight. It is normal to gain back a small percentage of this weight in the years after surgery.

Some people are content with this progress and enjoy the health benefits that come with weight loss. Unfortunately, some people are not satisfied with their weight loss and expect to reach and sustain unrealistic weight loss goals. Managing expectations about bariatric surgery is a necessary part of surgery success. We encourage you to accept your *Best Weight*. *Best Weight* is the lowest weight you can achieve while at the same time maintaining the healthiest lifestyle you can enjoy. The healthiest lifestyle you can enjoy includes:

- Eating habits that promote health
- Regular physical activity
- Maintaining emotional, psychological and social well-being

The CABSC offers four Laparoscopic surgeries:

- Roux-en-Y Gastric Bypass (bypass)
- Sleeve Gastrectomy (sleeve)
- Single Anastomosis Duodeno-Ileal Bypass with Sleeve Gastrectomy (SADI-S)
- Biliopancreatic Diversion with Duodenal Switch (DS)

**Bariatric surgery is a major operation and a life-changing event. It is very important for you to familiarize yourself with each surgery so that you can have an informed discussion with the surgeon about which surgery is right for you.**

**Please start with the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS) website and read the information on each surgery listed under Patient Resources.**

**[American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery \(asmbs.org\)](https://asmbs.org)**

For more information about bariatric surgery, visit:

- Obesity Canada website and read the information under the managing obesity link [Bariatric Surgery - Obesity Canada](#)
- CABSC website [Home \(ahs.ca/calbariatricappt\)](https://ahs.ca/calbariatricappt)

## Possible Benefits of Bariatric Surgery

- Remission of type 2 diabetes
- Improved cardiovascular health
- Decreased medications
- Less joint pain
- Relief of obstructive sleep apnea (OSA)
- Improved quality of sleep
- Improved fertility
- Improved energy and mobility
- Increased ability to travel
- Improved quality of life

## Possible Surgical Complications

Surgical complications are not common, but bariatric surgery is not without risk.

- As with any surgery, there is a risk of infection, blood clots, reaction to the anesthetic, and a rare but real risk of death.
- Immediate post-operative complications may include bleeding, leaks from the internal suture lines, and infection. You will be monitored at the hospital for signs and symptoms of these complications and treated as needed. For example, if you have a bleed or leak, you may need a second drain inserted or a second surgery.
- Early complications may cause you to not be able to eat enough and result in you needing a tube feed.
- Long-term post-operative complications may include gallstones, nutritional deficiencies, ulcers in the stomach or small intestine, and strictures (narrowing of the digestive tract).

**It is important to discuss any complications or issues that you are worried about with your bariatric team, your surgeon, your family physician and/or your other medical specialists.**

## The Bariatric Team

We are a team of specialized professionals committed to assisting you through your bariatric surgery journey. We are here to support you before, during and for one year post surgery. Your team will include a registered nurse who will be your case manager, a registered dietitian, a registered psychologist, an internal medicine specialist, and a bariatric surgeon.

My Bariatric Team	Name
Registered Nurse (RN)	
Registered Dietitian (RD)	
Registered Psychologist (RPsych)	
Internal Medicine (IM) Physician	
Bariatric Surgeon	

## Getting Started

First Steps	Date
<p>Referral received and you are accepted into the assessment phase of the CABSC program.</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p><b>Orientation Class - VIRTUAL CLASS</b> Learn about the program expectations and bariatric surgery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This class will be scheduled for you by the CABSC clerks.</li> <li>○ Ensure that you follow all the 'Orientation – pre class instructions' that will be emailed to you.</li> <li>○ The CABSC clerks will check you into this class before it starts. You will be asked to verbally provide your full name, birth date and confirmation that you are physically in Alberta. Please inform the class facilitator if you have a support person attending this virtual class with you.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Complete the intake package.</b> An intake package will be attached to the Orientation Class virtual invitation. Complete this package and return it to the clerks if you are interested in continuing in the clinic. Email is the best way to return the intake package. Once the clerks receive your completed package, they will call you to schedule an assessment with a Registered Nurse (RN) who will become your case manager.</p>	
<p>While waiting for your assessment with the RN case manager, visit the CABSC website (<a href="https://ahs.ca/calbariatricappt">ahs.ca/calbariatricappt</a>) and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Review website links and resources.</li> <li>○ Pay special attention to the video called 'Bariatric Surgery Essentials'. These important points are repeated on the next 2 pages (pages 5-6). Your RN case manager will review these 11 bariatric surgery essentials with you at your first assessment.</li> </ul>	

## Bariatric Surgery Essentials

### 1. Have regular meals

- Eat regularly throughout the day to ensure you are getting the nutrition you need. This practice will also help you manage your hunger which may reduce both overeating and emotional eating.
- By eating at regular intervals now, you will be better prepared to adjust to the post-surgical eating pattern which generally requires eating 3 meals and 2-3 snacks evenly spread over the day.

### 2. Choose balanced meals

- Include protein rich foods, vegetables, fruits, and grains at every meal. Including a variety of foods at your meals and snacks can help you meet your nutrition needs.

### 3. Use the Four Ps (Plan, Purchase, Prepare and Pack) for meal planning

- **Plan** what you want to eat ahead of time.
- **Purchase** the food you need to make meals and snacks.
- **Prepare** some meals/snacks in advance to save time and stress.
- **Pack** meals/snacks to bring with you to work, school, or when you are on the go. Packing meals and snacks can help you reduce eating out.

### 4. Keep a food record

- Use a food record to track your food and fluid intake. Share your food record with your dietitian so they can help you meet your nutrition needs.
- It is important to note that your food record is a tool to provide you with information about your habits, it is not a tool used for judgment. Use your food record to help you make food decisions.

### 5. Engage in Physical Activity

- There are many benefits to physical activity including improved strength, sleep, mobility, flexibility, circulation, heart health and mental health.
- Find ways to add enjoyable physical activity to your day. Physical activity can take place at home, outside, at a pool or a gym.

### 6. Seek Social Connection and Support

- Seek support from family, friends, and coworkers.
- A support person who accompanies you to appointments and classes and/or educates themselves about the surgery can help you with physical and emotional adjustments post-surgery.

### 7. Plan for no carbonated beverages

- Carbonated beverages can cause gas, bloating and discomfort post-surgery.
- Many carbonated beverages are high in calories and do not provide nutritional value. We ask you to also avoid non-caloric carbonated beverages.

## **8. Plan with your Primary Care Provider for no non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)**

- Stop taking non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications (NSAIDs) like Aspirin®, Ibuprofen®, Motrin®, Naproxen®, Aleve® or COX-2 inhibitors. These drugs can cause ulcers or stomach irritation in anyone but are especially linked to a kind of ulcer called marginal ulcer after gastric bypass. Marginal ulcers can bleed or perforate the stomach or small intestine leading to months or years of recovery.
- Speak with your family physician, medical specialist, or pharmacist about alternative medications you can take for pain management.

## **9. No smoking**

- Smoking and nicotine use is defined as: smoking, vaping, or inhaling any substance (nicotine, cannabis, shisha etc.), currently using nicotine products (chewing tobacco) or nicotine replacement therapies (patch, gum, inhaler, lozenge, or nasal spray).
- Smoking and nicotine use is associated with slower recovery post-surgery and increased risk of stomach ulcers.
- It is advised to avoid smoking and nicotine use lifelong following bariatric surgery.
- Smoking and nicotine use while registered in the CABSC program will result in discharge.

## **10. Plan for no alcohol or substance use**

- No safe amount of alcohol after bariatric surgery has been determined.
- Alcohol tolerance can change post-surgery because alcohol moves through your digestive system differently and may be absorbed into your bloodstream more quickly.
- Alcohol irritates the lining of the stomach.
- Alcohol is high in calories and has no nutritional value.
- Substance use is associated with poor health among bariatric patients and is associated with poor surgical outcomes.
- Alcohol use disorder is an increased risk post-surgery.
- Alcohol use is linked to cancer.

## **11. If applicable - Plan to delay pregnancy for two (2) years after surgery.**

- If you are a woman of childbearing age, we strongly advise you to NOT get pregnant for at least two (2) years after bariatric surgery.
- There are several reasons to avoid getting pregnant during this time:
  - Your body needs time to heal after surgery.
  - You need to adjust to significant life changes.
  - It is challenging to eat enough to support a healthy pregnancy.
  - Many women do not have enough folic acid, vitamin B12, and iron in their bodies post- surgery to support a healthy pregnancy.
  - Nutrient deficiencies can cause severe birth defects, and your baby may be born too small.

- Many women are more fertile post-bariatric surgery. We encourage you to speak to your family physician, gynecologist, or reproductive health care provider about effective birth control methods post-bariatric surgery. It is important to note that oral contraception (The Pill) may not be effective. If you are considering a tubal ligation, this procedure should be done several months before bariatric surgery to ensure you are protected from becoming pregnant.
- If you become pregnant at any time after bariatric surgery you and your baby will require close monitoring and support. You will need to be followed by a High-Risk Pregnancy Clinic and community dietitian. If you become pregnant while participating in the CABSC program, please contact your RN case manager for support.

## Assessment Phase

For **ALL** in-person appointments bring:

- Your Alberta Health Care card and one piece of government issued photo identification.
- Any questions you would like to discuss.

Registered Nurse (RN) Assessment – IN PERSON	Date & Time
<p>You will meet with a Registered Nurse (RN) who will be your case manager and help you navigate the CABSC program. The RN will review your health history, lifestyle changes, and knowledge of bariatric surgery. Together, you and the RN will create a list of goals that may be checked and added to by each bariatric team member. It will be your responsibility to work to achieve these goals before your next clinic appointment. A blood work requisition will be given to you to complete before your appointment with the Internal Medicine physician.</p> <p>For this appointment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Bring a list of your medical conditions and specialists.</li> <li>○ Bring a list of your medications, vitamins and mineral supplements.</li> <li>○ Be prepared to discuss your progress on the Bariatric Surgery Essentials, other lifestyle changes you have made, and goals that you wish to work towards.</li> <li>○ Be prepared to answer these questions:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Is bariatric surgery right for me?</li> <li>● Is this the right time in my life for bariatric surgery?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

Nutrition Basics Class with a Registered Dietitian (RD) - VIRTUAL CLASS	Date & Time
<p>In this class you will learn about the eating habits that are recommended specifically for people considering bariatric surgery.</p> <p>The CABSC clerks will check you into this class before it starts. You will be asked to verbally provide your full name, birth date and confirmation that you are physically in Alberta. Please inform the class facilitator if you have a support person attending this virtual class with you.</p>	
Internal Medicine (IM) Physician Assessment – IN PERSON	Date & Time
<p>The IM physician will review your health history, your medical concerns, and your medications and will assess your medical safety for bariatric surgery. You may be asked to complete additional testing. An Internal Medicine (IM) physician is <b>NOT</b> a bariatric surgeon.</p> <p>For this appointment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Complete your blood work at least <b>two (2) weeks</b> before this appointment.</li> <li>○ Bring a list of your medical conditions and specialists.</li> <li>○ Bring a list of your medications, vitamins and mineral supplements.</li> </ul>	
Improve your Relationship with Food Class – VIRTUAL CLASS	Date & Time
<p>Led by a Registered Psychologist, this group provides education and support to help you improve your relationship with food. This group is for both pre-surgery and post-surgery patients who have completed the Nutrition Basics class. Education is provided over four classes. Arrangements can be made to accommodate missed classes or scheduling concerns.</p> <p>To register call 403-955-8088.</p> <p>This group is for registered pre and post-surgery CABSC patients only. Sorry, no support people can attend as this group is considered a 'closed' group.</p>	

Registered Dietitian (RD) Assessment – IN PERSON	Date & Time
<p>The Registered Dietitian (RD) will review your food record and blood work results and provide education on eating well before and after surgery. You and the RD will review your list of goals and add to them as needed. Please note, after this assessment you will be offered two (2) more appointments with the registered dietitian.</p> <p>For this appointment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Make sure you have e-mailed a copy of your 3-day food record to the clinic before this appointment.</li> <li>○ Make sure you have your blood work completed before this appointment.</li> <li>○ Bring a list of your medications, vitamins and supplements.</li> </ul>	
Registered Psychologist (RPsych) Assessment – IN PERSON	Date & Time
<p>The psychologist (RPsych) will assess lifestyle, behavioral and health factors related to positive bariatric surgery outcomes. Please note, CABSC psychologists do not offer long term therapy but do offer short term support.</p> <p>For this appointment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Be prepared to discuss your progress on the goals you set with your bariatric team.</li> <li>○ Be prepared to discuss your learning from the class <i>Improve Your Relationship with Food</i>.</li> </ul>	
Follow-up Appointments – IN PERSON, VIRTUAL OR TELEPHONE	Date & Time
<p>You will follow-up with a bariatric team member <b>at least every 3 months</b>. The time between appointments is time to work on and achieve the goals you set with you CABSC team. Not every person will have the same number or type of appointments. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have follow-up appointments booked.</p> <p><b>No contact with CABSC for 6 months may result in discharge.</b></p> <p>It can take many follow-up appointments over a long period time to assess readiness and safety for bariatric surgery. If you miss two (2) appointments or classes, either in-person, virtual or telephone, you will be discharged from the program.</p>	

Follow-up Appointment with: _____	
<b>Surgery Assessment – IN PERSON</b>	<b>Date &amp; Time</b>
<p>You will be scheduled for a surgeon assessment by your RN case manager once the team feels you are practicing and maintaining the lifestyle changes required for a safe bariatric surgery. You will be sent a link to watch a video before this appointment. Time frames to see a surgeon vary. It could take several months before an assessment is scheduled. The surgeon will discuss which bariatric surgery is best for you, assess your surgical safety, and determine if any diagnostic testing is required (see below).</p> <p>If you are deemed a surgical candidate by the surgeon, CABSC clerks will book the <i>Preparing for Surgery Class</i> and required follow-up appointments.</p>	
<b>Possible Diagnostic Testing</b>	<b>Date &amp; Time</b>
<p><b>Endoscopy</b></p> <p>Endoscopy allows your surgeon to view your esophagus, stomach, and upper portion of your small intestine using an endoscope, which is a small tube with a camera attached. You will receive sedation during this procedure, therefore you will need to arrange for someone to drive you to and from this test.</p> <p>Your surgeon will refer you to a physician to complete the endoscopy. The physician’s office will call you directly with your appointment date, location, duration of the test and instructions on how to prepare for your endoscopy. Hospitals in Calgary and High River perform this procedure.</p> <p>You will need to call and confirm your appointment time one day before your endoscopy. The physician’s office will provide you with a date and the phone number to call to complete this task.</p> <p>Date you need to call to confirm appointment: _____</p> <p>Phone number to call: _____</p> <p>Location: _____</p> <p>For further information about this test:  <a href="https://myhealth.alberta.ca/health/tests-treatments/pages/conditions.aspx?Hwid=hw267678">https://myhealth.alberta.ca/health/tests-treatments/pages/conditions.aspx?Hwid=hw267678</a></p>	

<p><b>Upper Gastrointestinal (GI) Series (Barium Swallow)</b>                  An upper GI study allows the physician to view the inside of your mouth, throat, esophagus, stomach, and upper portion of the small intestine. At this appointment you will drink liquid barium which has a thick and chalky texture. As you ingest the liquid, a series of x-rays are taken. For further information about this test:  <a href="https://myhealth.alberta.ca/health/tests-treatments/pages/conditions.aspx?Hwid=hw235227#hw23230">https://myhealth.alberta.ca/health/tests-treatments/pages/conditions.aspx?Hwid=hw235227#hw23230</a></p> <p>The CABSC clerks will arrange for this test through a diagnostic center.</p>	
<p><b>Esophageal Manometry</b>                  Manometry assesses the function of the esophagus. A thin tube is guided down your throat to measure esophageal pressure and muscle strength. Local freezing into your mouth and nose may be provided to make the test more comfortable.</p> <p>Your surgeon's office will book this appointment for you. This test will be scheduled at South Health Campus.</p> <p>For further information about this test:  <a href="https://myhealth.alberta.ca/health/tests-treatments/pages/conditions.aspx?Hwid=hw4640">https://myhealth.alberta.ca/health/tests-treatments/pages/conditions.aspx?Hwid=hw4640</a></p>	
<p><b>Surgery Follow-up</b></p>	<p><b>Date &amp; Time</b></p>
<p>Once your tests are complete, <b>you must call</b> the CABSC clerks (403-955-8088) to book your surgeon follow-up appointment. The surgeon will review test results, and if safe for surgery, you will sign consent for surgery.</p>	

## Preparation Phase

### Getting your Surgery Date

Your surgeon's office will call you with a surgery date and location as well as the length of your pre-surgery liquid diet. The wait time for this call could be several weeks or months. **Please call the CABSC clerks (403-955-8088) once you have your surgery date and if your surgery date changes.** Failure to advise us could delay your surgery. The clerks will book your mandatory pre and post-surgery appointments. The surgeons perform bariatric surgery at the Peter Lougheed Centre (PLC) and South Health Campus (SHC). The type of surgery and operating room availability determines the location of your operation.

Surgery date: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of surgery: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of surgery: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of surgeon(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number of surgeon: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of liquid diet: \_\_\_\_\_

**Surgery may be canceled or postponed at any time before your surgery or on the day of surgery. Hospital staffing, changes in your physical, mental, or nutritional health, significant weight gain or inability to maintain lifestyle changes may result in your surgery being canceled or postponed.**

### Medication

Bariatric surgery and weight loss can alter the absorption of prescription and non-prescription medications (including supplements). It is essential to inform your medical team (family doctor, pharmacist, nurse practitioner, and/or medical specialist) of your upcoming surgery. Your medical team will review medications before and after surgery.

Be aware that:

- The type or dose of medication that you are taking may need to change after surgery. Review your medications with your family doctor, internal medicine physician or surgeon.
- If you are taking medications to manage diabetes, you will require close monitoring pre and post-surgery by your physician, nurse practitioner, pharmacist, Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE) or specialist. As you lose weight, your medications may need to be adjusted to avoid low blood sugar (hypoglycemia).
- If you are taking medication to manage mental health conditions such as depression or anxiety, you will need to speak with your family physician or psychiatrist regarding your prescription. The dosage may change as you lose weight.

- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs) such as Aspirin®, Ibuprofen®, Motrin®, Naproxen®, Aleve® or COX-2 inhibitors can increase your risk of developing ulcers, especially after bariatric surgery. If you are still using these medications, you must discuss alternative pain management with your medical team. (See pg. 11 for additional information.)
- Blood pressure and extended release medications may need to be adjusted or changed.
- **Birth control pills are not well absorbed following bariatric surgery and are not a reliable form of contraception.** Speak to your family physician, gynecologist, or reproductive health care provider about effective birth control. (See pg. 11 for additional information).

### Staying in Contact

It is your responsibility to stay in contact with your bariatric team **at least every 3 months** while waiting for surgery. Staying in contact includes in-person, virtual, or telephone appointments with one of the bariatric team members or attending an optional pre-surgery class (see below).

**If you are unable to fulfill this commitment, your surgery will be canceled, and you will be discharged from CABSC.**

Pre-Surgery Classes and Appointments	Date & Time
<p><b>Preparing for Surgery Class – VIRTUAL CLASS</b>                      Learn about preparing for bariatric surgery, what to expect in the hospital, and what to do once you are discharged home. You will also learn about post bariatric surgery eating recommendations. You will be provided handouts to use for upcoming appointments. This class is taught by a registered dietitian and a registered nurse. You are welcome to have a support person attend with you.</p>	
<p><b>Pre-Surgery Nutrition (RD) Appointment – IN PERSON</b>                      Discuss your pre-surgery liquid diet, blood work and review post-surgery eating recommendations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If applicable, complete your blood work <b>two (2) weeks</b> before this appointment.</li> <li>○ Bring your handouts and questions from the <i>Preparing for Surgery Class</i>.</li> </ul>	

### **Pre-Admission Clinic**

A nurse from the hospital will call you to review your medical history, medications and book an in-person appointment.

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number of Pre-Admission Clinic: \_\_\_\_\_

- Bring all of the medications, vitamin, mineral and natural health supplements you take (in their usual packaging), or a list of these including: doses, time of dose(s) and brand names.
- Complete pre-op blood work as directed by the Pre-Admission Clinic. This is not the same blood work requested by your bariatric team.

### **At this appointment:**

- You may get a hospital wrist band to wear – do not remove until you are discharged after your surgery.
- You will be instructed when to stop your medications, vitamins and supplements.
- If you use a c-pap or b-pap machine, you will receive instructions for its use in hospital.
- You will be instructed when to have your last meal.
- You will be instructed when to stop fluids.
- You may meet an Anesthesiologist.
- You may meet an Internal Medicine specialist.
- You may be required to get further medical testing.

<b>Optional Pre-Surgery Classes</b> To register: Call <b>403-955-8088</b>	<b>Date &amp; Time</b>
<p><b>Preparing for Bariatric Surgery Cooking Class – VIRTUAL CLASS</b>                      Prepare for bariatric surgery with this interactive virtual class designed to provide you with hands-on experience cooking and tasting dishes that are similar to what you will eat in the first few weeks after surgery. Please note you will be provided with a grocery list, equipment list and the recipes ahead of time. You will need to buy the groceries and have your space set up and ready to go in time for the cook-along. You will need to prepare some ingredients ahead of time.                      You may register if you have attended the Preparing for Surgery class and are waiting for a surgery date.                      This class is for registered pre-surgery CABSC patients only.</p>	
<p><b>Maintain the Change – VIRTUAL CLASS</b>                      This is a virtual group workshop led by a Registered Dietitian that will discuss various topics and answer questions you may have about bariatric surgery. This workshop is for patients who have attended the Preparing for Surgery class and are waiting for a surgery date.                      This class is for registered pre-surgery CABSC patients only.</p>	
<p><b>Bariatric Peer Support Group – VIRUAL CLASS</b>                      This peer run support group will discuss topics related to bariatric surgery. CABSC clerks take registration and host this class, but other CABSC staff do not attend. This class does not count as a check in while waiting for surgery.                      This class is for registered pre and post-surgery CABSC patients only.</p>	
<p><b>Improve Your Relationship with Food (see page 13) – VIRTUAL CLASS</b>                      Led by a Registered Psychologist, this group provides education and support to help you improve your relationship with food. This group is for both pre-surgery and post-surgery patients who have completed the <i>Nutrition Basics Class</i>. Education is provided over four classes. Arrangements can be made to accommodate missed classes or scheduling concerns.                      This class is for registered pre and post-surgery CABSC patients only. Sorry, no support people can attend as this group is considered a ‘closed’ group.</p>	

## Surgery Day

### Pack and bring:

- Your medications, vitamins, mineral and natural health supplements, or a list of these including doses, time of dose(s), and brand names.
- If applicable, bring your CPAP or BiPAP machine.
- Personal items (i.e., toothbrush, toiletries, change of clothes, slippers, reading materials, etc.).
- Do not bring valuables to the hospital.

### Once you are at the hospital:

- Go to the Admitting Department.
- You will be directed to either the Day Unit or Inpatient Unit. There, your demographics and health history will be reviewed by a nurse. It is helpful to know the time of your last dose of any medication you are taking. An IV may be started.
- You will be escorted to the waiting room, also called the Pre-Op Holding Area. You will meet your anesthesiologist and see your surgeon here before surgery.
- You will then be wheeled or asked to walk into the Operating Room for your surgery.
- After surgery, you will be taken to the Recovery Room, where the nurses and doctors will monitor you closely while you wake up from the anesthesia.

### When you wake up you will have:

- An intravenous line in your hand or arm to give you fluids and medication.
- Oxygen tubing or a mask on your face.
- A blood pressure cuff on your arm.
- A device like a clothespin called a pulse oximeter on your finger to check your oxygen.
- Compression stockings or pants on that will inflate and deflate automatically to promote blood circulation.
- Several small incisions on your abdomen, covered with small bandages. The bandages will stay on for 24-48 hours.
- A drainage tube in your abdomen to remove extra fluid and blood from the surgical area. The drain will be removed before you go home.

Once you are medically stable (usually 1-2 hours), you will be taken to the Inpatient Unit where you stay for 1-3 days or until you are ready for discharge.

### The morning after surgery:

- If all is well, you will be started on a full fluid diet and discharged within 1-3 days, depending on your condition.

## Hospital Stay

To help prevent surgical complications:

- You will be advised to practice coughing and taking deep breaths. These exercises will help you avoid breathing and lung problems.
- You will be encouraged to walk around often and/or wear compression stockings to prevent blood clots from forming in your legs.

Medications prescribed in the hospital may include:

- Pain medication. You can ask the nursing staff for this medication to lower your level of pain following surgery.
- Blood thinners to help prevent blood clots.
- Antibiotics to prevent or treat infections.
- Pantoloc (Pantoprazole) to prevent stomach ulcers and heartburn. Heartburn is also called acid reflux or gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). This medication is typically prescribed for six months, though some people need to take it longer. It is important to take this medication until the prescription is complete, even if you don't have any symptoms. Your surgeon will discuss this medication with you at your 6-month post-surgery appointment.

## At Home

### Hygiene

- You can shower once you get home from surgery or when your surgeon advises.
- Do not take a bath or swim until your incisions are well healed. Talk to your surgeon at your 1- month post-surgery appointment if you have further hygiene questions.

### Incision Care at Home

- The strips of tape over your incisions are called steri-strips. The steri-strips help to keep the edges of your incision together. Keep the steri-strips on your incisions clean and dry for 7-10 days, depending on your surgeon's instructions.
- If the steri-strips fall off, leave them off. If the steri-strips do not fall off in 10 days, remove them in the shower.
- It is normal to have some swelling or bruising around the incisions. It can take a few weeks to go away. If you notice increased drainage or odor from your incisions or severe swelling, bruising, or redness spreading around the incision, contact your surgeon.
- You may notice numbness in the incision area. During surgery, nerve endings to the skin are cut, resulting in numbness around the incision. The feeling may or may not return slowly over the next 2-3 months.

### Physical Activity

- For the first month after surgery start with short walks a few times a day. As you recover you will be able to walk further and more frequently. Remember - movement is medicine!
- You may resume sexual activity when you are comfortable and feel ready.
- At your 1-month post-surgery appointment discuss with your surgeon when to resume other physical activities and exercise routines in the weeks to come. Bring a list of your questions.
- In general, do not lift or carry anything heavier than 10 pounds for about 4-6 weeks. This includes things like a grocery bag, suitcase, laundry basket, vacuum cleaner, pet or child.

### Driving and Travelling

- Speak to your surgeon regarding when you may resume driving. It may be as soon as 1-2 weeks after surgery once you are no longer taking narcotic pain medication and can move with ease (e.g. shoulder checking).
- If you are planning to travel on a long car trip or take a flight, first speak with your surgeon to see when this is safe. They will recommend some ways to travel safely and comfortably.

### Work or School

- Most people return to work or school 4-6 weeks after surgery. Returning to work depends on what you do and how you feel. Talk to your surgeon at your 1-month post-surgery appointment about your return-to-work date.

## Symptoms of Surgical Complications

Listed below are symptoms that would indicate a **serious complication** and require you to go to the Peter Lougheed Centre (PLC) Emergency Department:

- Unable to eat and/or drink anything
- Ongoing vomiting and nausea for more than two (2) days
- Extreme diarrhea or constipation for more than three (3) days
- Blood in vomit or stools
- Fever over 39C (102F) or chills
- Very low blood sugar, fainting, passing out
- An incision that appears open, red, swollen, is draining pus or blood, and/or feels warm to the touch
- Abdominal pain and/or bloated or swollen stomach
- Pain with deep breathing or shortness of breath
- Redness or pain in legs or arms
- Increase in pain that cannot be managed with pain medication

**If you experience any of these symptoms, go to the Peter Lougheed Centre (PLC) Emergency Department. Tell them that you have had bariatric surgery. The CABSC surgeons are on call at Peter Lougheed Centre (PLC) which is why you must go to the PLC Emergency Department.**

## Post-Surgery Support Phase

Bring the following to **ALL** appointments:

- Your Alberta Health Care card and one piece of photo identification (for in-person appointments).
- Ensure you have a copy of your food record available for the dietitian. This can be e-mailed to your dietitian in advance or they can access your online food record from their computer.
- Your medication, vitamin, mineral and natural health supplement bottles or a list of these including dose(s), time of dose(s) and brand names.
- Any questions you would like to discuss.

Post-Surgery Classes and Appointments Attendance at in person appointments is required.	Date & Time
<p><b>1-Week PHONE Check-in with a Nurse (RN)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A nurse will call you to address surgery recovery questions and concerns.</li> <li>○ The nurse will remind you to call your surgeon's office to book your 1-month post-surgery follow-up appointment with your surgeon.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>2-Week PHONE Check-in with a Dietitian (RD)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A dietitian will call you to address nutrition concerns and diet progression.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>1-Month IN PERSON Appointment with a Surgeon</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The surgeon will examine your surgical incisions and answer your questions.</li> <li>○ This appointment usually occurs at the surgeon's office and not at CABSC.</li> <li>○ You will need to call your surgeon's office to schedule this appointment.</li> </ul> <p>Location: _____</p>	
<p><b>1-Month IN PERSON Appointment with a Nurse (RN) and Dietitian (RD)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Have a current food record available as well as a list of vitamins and medications, including doses, you are currently taking.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>3-Month IN PERSON Appointment with a Nurse (RN) and Dietitian (RD)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Future post-surgery appointments will be booked at this appointment.</li> <li>○ You will be provided with a blood work requisition for your 6-month appointment.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>6-Month IN PERSON Appointment with a Nurse (RN) and Dietitian (RD)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Complete your blood work at least <b>two (2) weeks</b> before this appointment. You will be provided with a blood work requisition for your 12-month appointment.</li> </ul>	

<p><b>6-Month IN PERSON Appointment or Phone Call with a Surgeon</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An in person appointment will be at CABSC.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>9-month Appointment with a Psychologist (RPsych)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This can be an <b>IN PERSON, VIRTUAL, TELEPHONE OR GROUP APPOINTMENT</b>. The group is for registered CABSC patients only.</li> <li>The psychologists may be accessed anytime post-surgery as needed.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>12-month IN PERSON Appointment with Nurse (RN) and Dietitian (RD)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete your blood work at least <b>two (2) weeks</b> before this appointment.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Sleeve Gastrectomy Patients</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You will be contacted by the Endoscopy Clinic 5 years post-surgery for an endoscopy to monitor your stomach and esophageal health. Further follow-ups will be determined by these test results.</li> </ul>	

Optional Post-Surgery Classes To register: Call 403-955-8088	Date & Time
<p><b>Bariatric Support Group - VIRTUAL CLASS</b></p> <p>This peer run support group will discuss topics related bariatric surgery. CABSC clerks take registration and host this class, but other CABSC staff do not attend.</p> <p>This class is for registered pre and post-surgery CABSC patients only.</p>	
<p><b>Body Image class – VIRTUAL CLASS</b></p> <p>Led by a Registered Psychologist, this class discusses changes in body image after weight loss from bariatric surgery. This class is offered every third month at varying times.</p> <p>This class is for registered CABSC patients only.</p>	

Discharge	Date & Time
<p>After 12 months of post-surgery care, and if safe to do so, CABSC will transition your care to your family physician for annual blood work and testing. Lifelong follow up is required for best health outcomes. Should you have medical complications related to your bariatric surgery, contact your surgeon’s office, <b>not</b> the CABSC program.</p> <p>CABSC clerks will contact you every year for at least five years to set up a follow-up appointment to track your progress. Follow up with bariatric surgery patients helps us with program development, growth and ongoing funding so AHS can continue providing bariatric surgeries.</p>	
<p><b>Two Year Follow up:</b> brief appointment with CABSC clerks for data collection.</p>	
<p><b>Three Year Follow up:</b> brief appointment with CABSC clerks for data collection.</p>	
<p><b>Four Year Follow up:</b> brief appointment with CABSC clerks for data collection.</p>	
<p><b>Five Year Follow up:</b> brief appointment with CABSC clerks for data collection.</p>	

## Life After Bariatric Surgery

### Weight Loss

- Bariatric surgery is a tool to help you manage obesity and to improve your overall health.
- People lose weight at different rates. Periods of rapid weight loss followed by periods of no weight loss are common in the first year after surgery. It is also common for people to lose weight at a fairly consistent rate. Do not compare your weight loss to others.
- Many people expect to lose more weight than is realistic. Therefore, do not set a weight loss goal. Having unrealistic expectations may bring up negative emotions when that goal is not met. You cannot fully control how much weight you lose after bariatric surgery.
- It is important to understand the idea of *Best Weight* (see page 6).
- While research varies on the number, weight regain of approximately 5-10% after you have reached your lowest weight is normal. This weight is what you must take as your *Best Weight*. Your work is to maintain this weight, not continually strive to reach an unattainable goal.
- You will likely still have obesity following bariatric surgery, but you will have less obesity, and will hopefully enjoy the many possible health and lifestyle benefits of your weight loss.

### Your Relationship with Food

- You may use food for comfort, overeat out of habit, or generally have a poor relationship with food. Emotional eating or loss of control eating post-surgery can lead to weight regain or complications like regurgitation or dumping syndrome. It is important to start using skills to manage problem eating prior to bariatric surgery and to continue using these skills after surgery. This is easier said than done, however helpful resources are available.
  - Watch the Set Yourself Up for Success videos on the AHS website ([ahs.ca/calbariatricappt](https://ahs.ca/calbariatricappt)).
  - Make an individual appointment with one the CABSC psychologists.
  - Enroll in the 'Improve Your Relationship with Food' class (see page 20).

### Body Image

- After bariatric surgery, your body may look and feel different than you had imagined. It can take time to get used to a different body shape and size. Be patient and you will adjust to these new feelings.
- Loose skin is a reality for many people who lose a significant amount of weight. Your bariatric team will give you information on skin removal surgery and/or discuss ways to accept loose skin as part of your weight loss journey.
- People may tell you your weight, and your looks have changed, but you may not see it yourself. Taking pictures of yourself at some point before your surgery and then regularly after surgery until you reach your *Best Weight* is a good way to help you manage your self-perception.

- You might not be prepared for the attention you receive from family, friends and co-workers. It is normal for people to notice change in your weight. Weight loss is highly valued in our culture, so most people are trying to be kind when they make comments. It is important to think about how this makes you feel as some people enjoy the attention and others do not. Either way it may be helpful to come up with a response so you are prepared for the attention. For example, saying “Thank you, I am enjoying how much easier it is to get in and out of the car”, acknowledges their attention yet focuses on improvement in movement, not on the amount of weight you have lost.
- Conversely, you may find that very few people make comments about your weight loss. Some people appreciate this lack of attention while others feel ignored. If someone important to you is not making comments about your weight loss, and it bothers or concerns you, it may be helpful to start a conversation to explore why.
- Make an appointment with one of the CABSC psychologists or attend the *Body Image Class* (see page 25) if body image is a concern for you.

### **Relationships**

- Some people in your life may be jealous or resentful of your weight loss and may try to sabotage your weight management efforts. You will need to communicate assertively with them. Invite them to change their attitude and become a part of your support system. Unfortunately, if they are not willing to become supportive, the relationship may end.
- You may find a new confidence after weight loss which results in creating new and healthy relationships. Surround yourself with people who are positive and who support you.

### **Managing Mental Health**

- You might expect to experience only positive emotions and improved mental health after bariatric surgery because you have lost weight. Hopefully this is true for you. However, as with any major life event, you may experience negative emotions too, such as sadness, anger, stress, boredom or even depression. You may also feel regret about having the surgery itself. Be prepared to experience both emotional ups and downs. Manage your mental health using resources you have in place or use the resources listed below.
- Research suggests that bariatric surgery is associated with an increased risk of substance abuse and/or addictions. If you find yourself using substance, please reach out for help.
- Mental Health and Addiction Resources
  - Your Employee and Family Assistance Program
  - Alberta Health Services: Access Mental Health (Calgary zone) 403-943-1500 ext. #2
  - Alberta Health Services: Help in Tough Times
  - Mental Health Hotline: 1-877-303-2642. Translation services available
  - Canadian Mental Health Association
  - Canadian Psychological Association
  - Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)
  - The Distress Centre – 403-206-4357 (24-hour crisis line)
  - Alberta Health Services Mental Health Helpline 1-877-0303-2642
  - Alberta Addiction Helpline 1-866-332-2332
  - 24-hour Mental Health Crisis Support – call or text 988

## Family and Friends – How to Help

- Accompany your family member/friend to appointments both in person and virtually when permitted.
- Learn the facts about obesity being a complex chronic disease and the real challenges of weight management and maintaining weight loss.
- Learn about the lifelong lifestyle changes your family member/friend will have to make for bariatric surgery success.
- Be patient as change takes time.
- Serve your family member/friend food that meets their needs. If you invite them to dinner, ask about their menu preferences so you can both relax and enjoy the visit. Don't make comments about their food choices. There is no such thing as good or bad food, or a perfect diet.
- Take part in physical activities with your family member/friend.
- Ask how your family member/friend would like to be supported. What you may think is support, your family member/friend may feel as annoyance.
- Offer encouragement and note the positive changes your family member/friend has made.
- Celebrate without food. Demonstrate support through flowers, gift cards, books, notes or cards of encouragement, etc.
- Celebrate non-scale victories to take the focus away from weight and weight loss. Focus on behaviors and feelings and thoughts, not numbers, when you congratulate them on what they have accomplished.
- Be clear, open and honest about how you feel. Every so often, check in and ask yourself how you are doing as a support person. Relationships change over time and yours will too, so make sure you keep discussing your support role with your family member/friend.
- Encourage your family member/friend to have a broad base of support. Help them connect to bariatric support groups or individuals who have had surgery, either in person or virtually.

### References

- American Society for Metabolic & Bariatric Surgery | [asmbs.org](https://asmbs.org)
- Obesity Canada | [obesitycanada.ca](https://obesitycanada.ca)

## Notes