

Weight Plateaus & Weight Regain



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WEIGHT PLATEAUS & WEIGHT REGAIN

After surgery, it is estimated that 20-35% of patients will have significant weight regain depending on the specific procedure performed and how far out you are from surgery. If you are struggling with weight plateaus or regain, this can be very distressing. You may be feeling anxious, guilty, ashamed, and/or reluctant to attend your follow-up appointments. However, before you throw in the towel, there are a few things worth considering when it comes to weight plateaus or weight regain after surgery.

First off, weight plateaus are common and happen after surgery!

If you have noticed a weight plateau, it does not mean that you are doing anything wrong nor does it require you to “break through” it if you are following appropriate post-surgical guidelines with nutrition and exercise.

Check in with yourself:

- Are you prioritizing protein? Aim for > 60g / day
- Are you drinking enough water? Aim for > 64oz / day
- Are you getting regular exercise? Aim for up to 300 minutes / week

If you are doing regular strength training exercises, this can cause your body to temporarily hold onto water, slowing your weight loss and causing the number on the scale to stall. Don't fret! Building muscles is important for your metabolism, so be patient with the process and keep up your efforts.

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Weight loss after bariatric surgery is most noticeable- and most significant- early on. This is typically due to your body adapting to a lower calorie diet and adjusting to finding alternative energy sources to find fuel to run off of.

At first, your body will turn to your muscles and liver to use up the energy stores found there. Then, it will eventually turn to your fat stores and lean muscle mass for fuel.

As your body burns muscle, your metabolism will begin to slow down. This is typically reflected on the scale when you begin noticing a weight plateau.

Weight plateaus can last 2 - 6 weeks (or longer) during your first year of surgery.

There are other reasons for why you may experience weight plateaus or weight regain right after surgery:

- Surgical reasons: your gastric band may be malfunctioning or not restrictive enough, your gastric pouch may be enlarged (although there is some surgical debate about this), your intestinal connections dilated, or you may have a new link between your stomach and remnant stomach (in bypass patients)
- Your hormones are recalibrating
- You may be pregnant
- You may be menopausal
- You may have high sugar and insulin levels after being off your diabetic medications
- Some of your medications may cause weight gain as a side effect
- You may have stopped smoking
- You may have a hormone disorder such as Cushing's disease or severe low thyroid function (hypothyroidism)

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Permanent weight plateaus are more likely to occur about 1-1.5 years after Roux en Y gastric bypass and sleeve gastrectomy, and roughly 2.5 years after adjustable gastric banding surgery. However, if you're earlier on in your bariatric journey, weight plateaus / weight regain are not unusual.

Rather than focusing on the number on the scale that doesn't seem to budge, try measuring your waist circumference with a soft tape measure and pay attention to your body composition and inches lost versus the number on the scale.

In addition, be sure to check in with your eating and movement patterns.

Sometimes, old unhealthy habits find ways of sneaking back into your new bariatric lifestyle:

- You've been grazing, nibbling, and mindlessly munching more often
- You're consuming more high energy foods (fast food / processed foods) and sugar-sweetened beverages
- You no longer have symptoms related to dumping syndrome
- You feel like you've lost control over your urges and are bingeing more often
- You are less consistent with your healthy eating behaviors after weight loss surgery
- You're drinking more alcohol
- You're less active during the day and are more sedentary
- When you exercise, you aren't doing enough moderate-to vigorous intensity exercise
- You may have an injury limiting your exercise ability

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If any of these ring true with you, try focusing on one at a time and work on it consistently until you feel like you've mastered it before moving onto the next habit. Before you know it, you'll be breaking through your plateau in no time!

However, if you've been feeling frustrated, are still struggling, and need consistent support and accountability to get back-on-track...

We're here to help!

[Join our Bariatric Family called "Banana Barietrics"](#)

At Banana Barietrics, we'll help you kickstart that "fresh bariatric mindset" again in order to feel re-motivated, confident, and successful with your tool... regardless of how far out from surgery you are.

What Is Banana Barietrics?

Banana is an online bariatric support community focused on helping weight loss surgery patients navigate weight regain and general struggles after bariatric surgery through weekly support groups, educational courses, and family-style friendships with others on a similar health journey.

[Join our family today!](#)

