Get back to enjoying the everyday moments.

Obesity is one of the nation’s leading health issues. More than half of Americans are overweight and roughly 12 million Americans have severe obesity (defined as being 100 pounds or more overweight)*. Obesity is a major cause of diabetes, heart disease, degenerative joint disease and even premature death.

Choosing weight-loss surgery is a big decision. At Carolinas HealthCare System, we become your personal weight-loss support team, keeping you included, informed and inspired to embrace a healthier lifestyle.

Am I a candidate?
We are dedicated to helping you navigate the decision of whether bariatric surgery is right for you.

To qualify for surgery, you should:
- Be between 18 and 70 years of age (in most cases).
- Have a body mass index (BMI) of 35 or greater, and typically exhibit a serious medical co-morbidity (such as Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, sleep apnea, etc.).
- Be highly motivated to make an important lifestyle change.

* According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
The first steps toward **better health.**

To ensure the most successful surgical outcomes, our healthcare team will conduct a comprehensive medical history, physical exam and pre-operative evaluation, including information about:

- **Your overall medical health**, including your family health background and existing medical conditions, behavioral patterns and emotional and environmental influences.
- **Your nutrition and weight history**, including weight trends, diet attempts, eating habits, exercise regimen, stress level, time constraints and motivation to ensure you understand the necessary steps to take after surgery.

Success Stories

Behind each of these patients is an incredible success story. See how weight-loss surgery helped patients like them get back to enjoying the everyday moments by visiting CarolinasHealthCare.org/Bariatric.
Bariatric Surgery Options
Our weight-loss surgeons are board certified and use minimally invasive surgical techniques that allow you to recover faster, with fewer complications and smaller incisions. Most patients leave the hospital in one to two days.

- **Adjustable Gastric Band**
  An adjustable silicone band is wrapped around the upper part of the stomach, creating a small pouch that restricts food intake, causing an earlier sense of fullness with smaller amounts of food. Gastric banding is considered the least invasive bariatric surgery.

- **Vertical Sleeve Gastrectomy**
  A portion of the stomach is removed, creating a banana-shaped pouch that restricts the amount of food that can be consumed and absorbed by the body. Most studies have shown greater weight loss with this procedure than adjustable gastric banding.

- **Roux-en-Y Gastric Bypass**
  The stomach is stapled and divided, creating a small pouch, and attached to the middle of the small intestine. Food bypasses a section of the small intestine (duodenum and jejunum), restricting the amount of food consumed into the stomach and limiting absorption of calories. Most studies have shown greater weight loss with this procedure than gastric banding or sleeve gastrectomy.

Read success stories like Mike’s at CarolinasHealthCare.org/Bariatric

Register for a FREE seminar
Learn more about bariatric surgery options. Register for a free seminar near you.

866-965-4957 | CarolinasHealthCare.org/Bariatric
What Sets Us Apart

- **Nationally Recognized** – The Joint Commission has recognized Carolinas Medical Center-Mercy as the first in North Carolina and fifth in the nation for disease-specific care in bariatrics.
- **Quality Care** – Our bariatric program exceeds national standards for quality and patient safety.
- **Comprehensive Team Approach** – We provide a team of experts in many areas of focus, including nutritionists, bariatricians, mental health providers, registered nurses and surgeons, all working collaboratively to develop a personalized plan for each patient we treat.
- **Bariatric Surgery Centers of Excellence** – We have earned the MBS-AQIP designation by the American College of Surgeons, which demonstrates our commitment to safe and high-quality care of our bariatric patients.
- **Non-surgical Options** – We offer a weight management program designed for patients pursuing a non-surgical option for healthy weight loss.

Bariatric surgery is performed at Carolinas Medical Center-NorthEast and Carolinas Medical Center-Mercy. Both have earned the following distinctions:

- Aetna Institutes of Quality.
- Blue Cross Blue Shield Blue Distinction Center for Bariatric Surgery.
- Cigna Certified Center for Bariatric Surgery.
- OptumHealth (United Healthcare) Bariatric Surgery Center of Excellence.

**Continuing with You Every Step of the Way**

Successful long-term weight loss requires commitment, even after bariatric surgery. Our goal is to give you the personalized support and guidance you need to lose weight and keep it off for the rest of your life by:

- Providing a comprehensive follow-up program, including psychological support, nutritional assessment and exercise.
- Offering monthly support group and individual counseling to help overcome self-defeating habits.

Postoperative care continues at Carolinas Weight Loss Surgery (Concord, NC) and Carolinas Weight Management (Charlotte, NC).

**Cost of Surgery**

Understanding the details of medical insurance coverage as it relates to weight-loss surgery can be overwhelming. That’s why our team has full-time financial specialists who help you understand:

- The specifics of your weight-loss surgery insurance benefits.
- Your out-of-pocket financial responsibilities.
How long will I be out of work?
People recover at different speeds. You can expect to walk in the halls the evening after your surgery and on a regular basis in the following days. Many people find they are ready to return to work in two weeks. Some feel they can return earlier, some later.

Will my insurance cover bariatric surgery?
All insurance coverage is different, so this depends on your individual insurance plan. Please bring your photo ID and insurance card to one of our FREE bariatric seminars, where our insurance coordinator will review your insurance plan and assess your coverage before you are enrolled in the surgery program.

How long does the surgery take?
Most cases take one to two hours, depending on the surgical procedure. This can change depending on a patient’s anatomy, adhesions inside the abdomen and any previous surgery.

How long am I in the hospital?
Most patients remain in the hospital for one to two days. Adjustable gastric banding patients are discharged on the same day as their surgery. The stay can be prolonged if there are circumstances requiring continued monitoring or therapy. You are required to remain in the area for a full week after your surgery.

What kind of foods can I eat after surgery?
All patients meet with a nutritionist prior to surgery to review the post-operative diet progression. Most patients are back to eating regular foods about a month after surgery, but in much smaller portions. All patients are encouraged to follow a healthy eating plan after surgery and are encouraged to always “eat protein first” at every meal. All patients are also encouraged to limit foods high in carbohydrates and sugars, as these may cause discomfort and possible complications.

Will I ever gain weight after surgery?
Obesity can cause biological changes within your body that can make you more susceptible to weight regain. However, with proper nutrition, lifestyle changes, desire and motivation, you can keep your weight off for a lifetime.

What are the benefits of surgery?
With bariatric surgery, you can expect to lose a minimum of 50 percent of excess weight and improve or eliminate obesity-related conditions, including Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, sleep apnea and fatty liver disease.