

## #ABLATION

## Weight Loss Surgery

There are a variety of factors that increased the odds of a participant having a change in relationship status post-weight loss surgery.



**S**ingle adults in the US who get weight-loss surgery are more than twice as likely to get married within five years, when compared to the general population.

Likewise, adults who are married and get bariatric surgery are more than twice as likely to get divorced, according to a new analysis.

The study is the first to characterize marital outcomes among US adults who underwent bariatric surgery, giving patients and doctors concrete data on changes in romantic relationships post-surgery.

"Weight loss is generally the goal of bariatric surgery, but it's also a source of motivators for wanting to lose weight—for example, remission of Type 2 diabetes and improvement in joint pain," says lead study author Wendy King, associate professor of epidemiology at the University of Pittsburgh Public Health.

"Patients have also described the desire for romantic partnership or improving relationships as important motivators. Before this study, we had no quantitative data in the US on how marital status changes after bariatric surgery are patients more likely to get married, divorced, find romantic stability?"

The study in Annals of Surgery Open, King and her colleagues examined data on 1,441 US adults who between 2006 and 2009 underwent Roux-en-Y gastric bypass or sleeve gastrectomy, the two most common and effective surgical treatments for severe obesity. The participants ranged in age from 19 to 75 years old and 79% were women. At the time of surgery 62% were married or living with a partner while the rest were separated, divorced, widowed or had always been single.

The participants were enrolled in the National Institutes of Health-funded Longitudinal Assessment of Bariatric Surgery-2 (LABS-2), a prospective, cohort study of patients undergoing weight-loss surgery.

Consistent with previous studies in Scandinavia, the vast majority of the LABS-2 participants maintained their relationship status for the five years they were followed after weight-loss surgery with 81% of married participants staying married and 70% of always-single participants staying single.

But 18% of unmarried participants got married, compared to 7% of the general US population; and 8% of mar-

Al-Biruni's description is remarkably accurate, but Ibn-Battuta has allowed his fancy to take hold of his observations when he says that the head of a rhinoceros is bigger than that of an elephant. He does not mention the locality where the king hunted but it could be the environs of present-day Delhi. We have yet another interesting notice of the rhinoceros, this one dating to 1387-1388 from Prince Muhammad Khan, son and successor of Sultan Firuz Shah Tughluq. He marched towards the Sirmaur hills and there spent two months, hunting rhinoceros and elk (deer). The locality is the Himalayan foothills in the southeast of the present-day Himachal Pradesh.



Divyabhanusinh  
Ex India head for  
WWF, A renowned  
wildlife expert

**T**ried participants got divorced, compared to 4% of the general population. An additional 5% of married participants who did not get divorced got separated.

There were a variety of factors that increased the odds of a participant having a change in relationship status post-surgery, King notes. Some were expected: Younger participants and those living with a partner before surgery were more likely to get married throughout the following five years. But some were more surprising. For example, the amount of weight lost was not associated with whether someone got married but improved physical health was.

Finally, weight loss did matter when it came to separation and divorce. Participants who lost more weight were more likely to get separated or divorced as were those who reported an increase in sexual desire post-surgery.

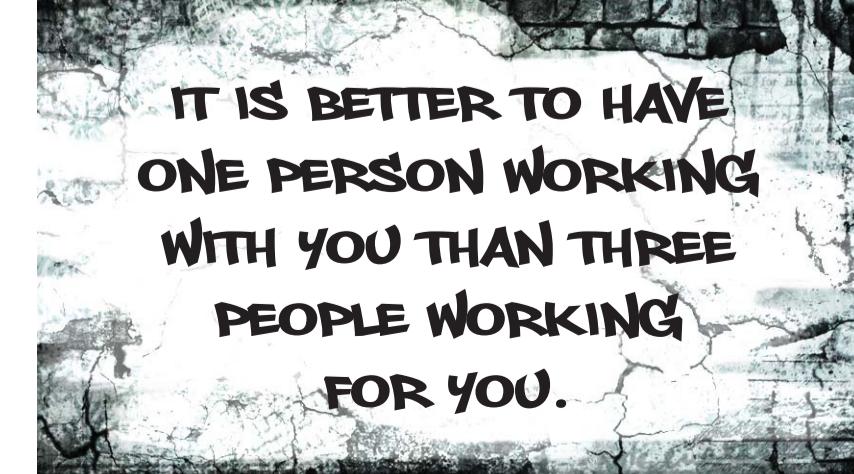
This could indicate that a patient's changing lifestyle post-surgery put them out of sync with their spouse," King says. "It can be really hard when one spouse changes what they eat and how active they are and desires more sexual activity while the other doesn't. That can put significant strain on a marriage. It may be important for couples to consider this and have strategies to maintain their connection after surgery."

King notes that the LABS-2 study did not include participants who had decided to change their romantic relationship status was among their motivations for getting bariatric surgery, so the team could not determine if the participants who got married or divorced went into surgery hoping for a change.

"Our relationships with others particularly lifelong partners have been shown to have a profound impact on our health, both physical and mental," says King. "It will be important for future studies to disentangle the directionality of the various associations between bariatric surgery and relationship status that we uncovered in this study so doctors can best counsel their patients and manage expectations before and after surgery."

Amanda S. Hinerman and Gretchen E. White, both PhDs at the University of Pittsburg, are co-authors of the study. No funding was provided for this specific analysis, but LABS-2 received funding through a cooperative agreement with the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases.

## THE WALL



## Telling the Story of our Gainda

### The Unicorn (...2)

## #CLASSIFICATION