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VITAL SIGNS

Prognosis: Study Finds Troubles With Gastric Band Surgery

By RONI CARYN RABIN
Published: March 24, 2011

More than a decade after having gastric band surgery for weight loss, [patients at a university hospital in Belgium had lost just 43 percent of their excess weight on average](#), a new study reports. In nearly half of the patients, the bands had been removed because of medical complications.

Although the study included just 82 of 151 patients who had laparoscopic gastric band surgery at the hospital from 1994 to 1997, it is believed to be

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the first to track the outcomes over a long period. The report was published last week in Archives of Surgery.

The bands eroded in almost one in three patients, the researchers found. Sixty percent had undergone additional surgery, including 17 percent who went on to have gastric bypass. Researchers concluded that the adjustable gastric band surgery, which is growing in popularity in the United States, "appears to result in relatively poor long-term outcomes."

The results "are worse than we expected," said Dr. Jacques Himpens, of the European School of Laparoscopic Surgery and St. Pierre University Hospital in Brussels, lead author of the new study. Dr. Himpens advised those considering gastric band surgery not to "nourish exaggerated expectations," adding that anyone who has had the procedure should see a care provider on a regular basis and be vigilant for signs of infection or band erosion.

A version of this article appeared in print on March 29, 2011, on page D6 of the New York edition.



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