

## **ALTERNATIVES:**

### ***Alternatives for the treatment of Morbid Obesity***

People that have contemplated the idea of a weight reduction plan, certainly have no alternatives. In order to meet the requisites of any insurance coverage for the surgical treatment of morbid obesity in the United States, many insurance companies require the patients medical history and plan for weight reduction with medical supervision. The majority of weight reduction programs by non-surgical means are based on a diet combination, exercise and behavior modification.

Unfortunately, even the most efficient surgeries have only demonstrated to produce results in a small percentage of patients. It is calculated that less than 5% of the people that participated in weight reduction programs by non-surgical means lose a significant amount of weight and maintain that loss for a long time. According to the National Health Institute, more than 90% of the total population that participates in these programs recovers their previous weight within one year.

Patients with morbid obesity have greater difficulty in keeping the lost weight. Serious health risks have been identified in people who jump from diet to diet and whose bodies are subject to weight gain and loss in a continuous manner, the so called yo-yo dieting.

The fact is that morbid obesity continues to be a chronic, complex and multifactor illness. Weight reduction surgery, compared to other surgeries, has provided a prolonged period of weight reduction for patients that have failed in other therapies.

For many patients that have not undergone the surgery, death is a greater risk than any later complication after the surgery. This is the main reason why in 2000 approximately 40,000 weight reduction surgeries were performed and the reason why the American Society of Bariatric Surgery calculates that in 2001 the number will raise to 50,000 surgeries.

Patients that have undergone such surgery and who have enjoyed the results have given the best testimonies experienced in quality of life, social interactions, psychological welfare, job opportunities and economic well being.

In clinical studies, the candidates for the procedure with diverse health conditions related to morbid obesity asked if the operation was safe. These studies show that the patient selection criterion is very serious and that the surgery constitutes a good alternative for the majority of the patients.

### ***The surgical treatment of obesity; a serious focus for a serious problems.***

The surgical treatment of obesity is major surgery, and it is practiced more and more each day, and it is the result of three factors:

1. - Our present knowledge of the significant health risks that morbid obesity can cause.
2. - The degree of risks and complications is relatively low, compared to the no operation and the inefficiency of other non-surgical methods used to reduce weight gained.
3. - Above all, the surgery must be considered a method to alleviates an illness, which debilitates and produces suffering to the patient.

In the majority of the cases, the minimum requisite to be taken into account to be a candidate for the surgery is a minimum of 100 pounds overweight, or to have an IMC of 40 or more. Occasionally, a patient with IMC of 35 or higher can be considered as a candidate for the surgery if the doctor determines the health conditions of the patient due to the over weight are at risk, and the surgery is the only alternative possible. In many cases, patients are forced to prove that any other weight reduction plan has failed. However, the most important factor is the patient's promise of a long-term continuous care after the surgery.

**THE KEY TO WEIGHT LOSS: Changing the equilibrium between energies.**

Equilibrium between energies is the relationship between how much food is absorbed and how much energy the body uses.

The body stores the excess of energy in the form of fat until its needed to be burned again as energy. When the energy burned during physical activity is greater than the energy present in the food intake, the reserves are used up and excess fat is burned to satisfy the needs of the body. Therefore, a lesser food intake or a greater degree of physical activity will reduce weight.

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