

LETTERS

BODY RECONTOURING AFTER BARIATRIC SURGERY

Guidelines on body recontouring after bariatric surgery are available

Jonathan A Dunne *specialist trainee year 4 registrar in plastic surgery*¹, Richard Welbourn *consultant upper gastrointestinal surgeon*², Mark Soldin *consultant plastic and reconstructive surgeon*¹

¹St George's Hospital, London SW17 0QT, UK; ²Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton TA1 5DA, UK

Bucknor and colleagues rightly state that recently updated National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines for management of obesity did not include reconstructive body contouring surgery after massive weight loss.¹ However, NICE accredited national commissioning guidelines for such surgery were published in 2014, to standardise referrals and avoid the current postcode lottery.²

Such surgery is not cosmetic. Its aim is to improve functional, psychological, and social problems secondary to redundant skin. Skin ulceration requires long term management,³ while a quarter of patients with obesity have psychological disorders.⁴ Over 70% of patients seek reconstructive surgery after massive weight loss,⁵ and procedures include apronectomy, upper body lift, and medial thigh lift.

Inclusion criteria for such surgery are:

- Starting body mass index (BMI) of ≥ 40 (or ≥ 35 with comorbidities)
- Current BMI ≤ 28 (those with BMI < 40 eligible for apronectomy only)
- Weight stability for 12 months
- Serious functional disturbances.

The full guidance is published on the British Association of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeons (BAPRAS)

website.² Wider dissemination of these guidelines is essential to practise with best available evidence. This would allow obese patients who have lost weight a real chance to reintegrate into society as healthy contributing individuals.

Competing interests: RW is the current president of the British Obesity and Metabolic Surgery Society (BOMSS); MS is chairman of the body contouring special interest group for the British Association of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeons (BAPRAS).

Full response at: www.bmj.com/content/349/bmj.g7637/rr.

- 1 Bucknor A, Ekwobi C. Need for guidelines on body recontouring after bariatric surgery. *BMJ* 2014;349:g7637. (16 December.)
- 2 British Association of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeons. Commissioning guide: massive weight loss body contouring. 2014. www.bapras.org.uk/docs/default-source/commissioning-and-policy/body-contouring-surgery-commissioning-guide-published.pdf?sfvrsn=0.
- 3 Mitchell JE, Crosby RD, Ertelt TW, Marino JM, Sarwer DB, Thompson JK, et al. The desire for body contouring surgery after bariatric surgery. *Obes Surg* 2008;18:1308-12.
- 4 Rosenberger PH, Henderson KE, Grilo CM. Psychiatric disorder comorbidity and association with eating disorders in bariatric surgery patients: a cross-sectional study using structured interview-based diagnosis. *J Clin Psychiatry* 2006;67:1080-5.
- 5 Kitzinger HB, Abayev S, Pittermann A, Karle B, Bohdjalian A, Langer FB, et al. After massive weight loss: patients' expectations of body contouring surgery. *Obes Surg* 2012;22:544-8.

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