

What Family and Friends Want to Know (But Are Afraid to Ask)

Your spouse may be wondering if your LAP-BAND[®] System will interfere in the bedroom. Your mother may be wondering how safe all this really is. Whatever the concern, here are the answers to share.

You probably had lots of questions before and after your LAP-BAND[®] System surgery. Your loved ones may have questions too—although they may not always speak up. If conversation about sensitive topics is a little uncomfortable, try sending them this article covering some common questions. You can also direct them to other areas of Lapband.com or to printed materials you've received from your doctor. It's a simple way to share information and ease concerns.

Q: How soon can people resume sexual activity following LAP-BAND[®] System surgery?

A: "Listen to your body," advises Christine Ren, MD, associate professor of surgery at New York University Medical Center in New York City. "You might be sore for a few days, but you should be feeling fine in a week or so." Be gentle with yourself in the beginning as you resume sexual relations with your partner, and avoid activities that feel too vigorous, she suggests.

John Dixon, MD, head of the Obesity Research Unit, Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, agrees: "Give yourself time to heal, and then go for it." However, he notes, there's an important consideration for women who have had troubling conceiving due to polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), a condition linked to obesity. Some women with PCOS can quickly become fertile when they lose weight, even if they were infertile before surgery, and need to be aware that they may become pregnant. "You should consult your gynecologist to discuss your options," Dr. Dixon suggests.

Q: Does LAP-BAND[®] System surgery affect libido?

A: Yes, it does, says Dr. Dixon. "Weight loss can improve libido!" he says. LAP-BAND[®] System patients typically experience an increase in desire and a renewed interest in lovemaking as they slim down.

Q: Is the surgery for the LAP-BAND[®] System risky?

A: "Weigh the risks of having the surgery against the dangers of not having it," suggests Dr. Ren. Obesity is associated with about 112,000 deaths each year in the United States relative to healthy-weight individuals.¹ In addition, obesity is a major risk factor for serious medical conditions, such as type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, and cancer.² "What's more, it's an emotional, social, and even an employment issue," notes Dr. Ren. "There's lots of discrimination out there."

A few other points to share:

- * Your surgeon has considered a number of criteria to make sure the LAP-BAND® System is right for you.
- * More than 500,000 LAP-BAND® System devices have been sold worldwide. Check out just a few of the success stories right here on the LAP-BAND® System website.
- * Published results from past surgeries indicate that laparoscopic adjustable gastric banding may have fewer risks than other surgical treatments for obesity.^{3,4}

Q: How can you afford it?

A: Today, many health plans (including Medicare and, in some states, Medicaid) cover the cost of LAP-BAND® System surgery. The personal cost of living with obesity can also be significant. Consider:

- * Out-of-pocket healthcare expenses
- * Co-pays for doctor's office visits
- * Co-pays for specialists
- * Prescription co-pays
- * Nonsurgical weight-loss programs
- * Over-the-counter medication costs
- * Co-pays for lab work
- * Co-pays for physical therapists/allied health professionals
- * Days of missed work
- * Grocery and dining costs

These expenditures quickly add up, but dramatic weight loss can greatly reduce weight-related costs.

Q: How can I support a LAP-BAND® System patient?

A: Read up on the surgery, attend orientation meetings, accompany your loved one to appointments, and in general, offer your unconditional love and understanding as your loved one progresses along his or her journey. Remember that an important part of living with the LAP-BAND® System is making healthy and satisfying diet choices and finding fun and effective exercise options. So let your loved one choose the restaurant when you dine out together. Offer to go on walks with him or her. Find simple yet meaningful ways to give encouragement.

References:

- 1 Weight-Control Information Network (WIN); an information service of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK). Statistics related to overweight and obesity. June 2007. Available at <http://win.niddk.nih.gov/statistics/index.htm>. Accessed May 2, 2007.
- 2 Weight-Control Information Network (WIN); an information service of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney diseases (NIDDK). Do you know the health risks of being overweight? Available at http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/health_risks.htm. Accessed May 2, 2007
- 3 Parikh MS, Laker S, Weiner M, Hajiseyedjavadi O, Ren CJ. "Objective Comparison of Complications Resulting from Laparoscopic Bariatric Procedures" *J. Am. Coll. Surg.* 2006 202(2): 252-261.
- 4 Longitudinal Assessment of Bariatric Surgery (LABS) Consortium, Flum DR, Belle SH, King WC, et al. "Perioperative Safety in the Longitudinal Assessment of Bariatric Surgery" *N Eng J Med.* 2009;361(5):445-454.

IMPORTANT LAP-BAND[®] SYSTEM SAFETY INFORMATION

Indications: The LAP-BAND[®] System is indicated for use in weight reduction for severely obese patients with a Body Mass Index (BMI) of at least 40 or a BMI of at least 35 with one or more severe comorbid conditions, or those who are 100 lbs. or more over their estimated ideal weight.

Contraindications: The LAP-BAND[®] System is not recommended for non-adult patients, patients with conditions that may make them poor surgical candidates or increase the risk of poor results (e.g., inflammatory or cardiopulmonary diseases, GI conditions, symptoms or family history of autoimmune disease, cirrhosis), who are unwilling or unable to comply with the required dietary restrictions, who have alcohol or drug addictions, or who currently are or may be pregnant.

Warnings: The LAP-BAND[®] System is a long-term implant. Explant and replacement surgery may be required. Patients who become pregnant or severely ill, or who require more extensive nutrition may require deflation of their bands.

Anti-inflammatory agents, such as aspirin, should be used with caution and may contribute to an increased risk of band erosion.

Adverse Events: Placement of the LAP-BAND[®] System is major surgery and, as with any surgery, death can occur. Possible complications include the risks associated with the medications and methods used during surgery, the risks associated with any surgical procedure, and the patient's ability to tolerate a foreign object implanted in the body.

Band slippage, erosion and deflation, reflux, obstruction of the stomach, dilation of the esophagus, infection, or nausea and vomiting may occur. Reoperation may be required.

Rapid weight loss may result in complications that may require additional surgery. Deflation of the band may alleviate excessively rapid weight loss or esophageal dilation.

Important: For full safety information please visit www.Lapband.com, talk with your doctor, or call Allergan Product Support at 1-800-624-4261.

CAUTION: Rx only.