

ATgoal

Use ALL Your Tools

Weight loss surgery is a tool your surgeon can offer, but psychologists can offer another tool: therapy. A number of studies have shown that patients who undergo therapy following weight loss surgery do better than those who do not. While many look at the requirement for pre-operative therapy as silly, one of the very real advantages is that it allows you to get to know another resource that can help you find success.

Suggesting that therapy may be a good tool for you doesn't mean that you are crazy or that you have an eating disorder; it simply means that having some neutral party to help you sort out your relationships to food and stress can be great. Friends and family are not always as supportive as a neutral third party. Sometimes family can even impede your progress: you know, the mother who thinks you are not eating enough, or the brothers and sisters who tell you to eat dessert even though they know your goal is to lose weight.

Support groups are another form of group therapy that can be used to discuss stress, your relationship to food, and your relationships in general. The great advantage of support groups is everyone there is going through the same thing you are. The successful patients can tell you how they overcame stress, or other issues, and knowing that what you are going through has been going on with other patients is a big help. You are not alone—you are a member of a larger community of weight loss patients.

Online support groups can also be helpful, especially if they are moderated by professionals. But be careful, different surgeons have different routines for their patients, and if they disagree with your surgeon, be certain to discuss any variation from your program with your surgeon.

Go to your support group, get in touch with a psychologist—use all the tools available and get to your goal! ❖

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did you **KNOW?**

One of the most common misconceptions about weight loss surgery is that you should eat until you feel full. Those who eat until they feel that sensation will find they will not do as well as those who define a portion (by volume, not by weight) and walk away. The tool of weight loss surgery—be it duodenal switch, RNY, the LAP-BAND, or sleeve gastrectomy—allows you to be satisfied after a small portion of food; it's not designed to make you feel full. The danger lies in the fact that, over time, it will take more and more food to achieve that full feeling.