



# Interdisciplinary European Guidelines on Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery

M. Fried · V. Yumuk · J. M. Oppert · N. Scopinaro · A. Torres · R. Weiner · Y. Yashkov · G. Frühbeck · on behalf of International Federation for the Surgery of Obesity and Metabolic Disorders—European Chapter (IFSO-EC) and European Association for the Study of Obesity (EASO)

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**Abstract** In 2012, an expert panel composed of presidents of each of the societies, the European Chapter of the International Federation for the Surgery of Obesity (IFSO-EC), and of the European Association for the Study of Obesity (EASO), as well as of the chair of EASO Obesity Management Task Force (EASO OMTF) and other key representatives from IFSO-EC and EASO, devoted the joint Medico-Surgical Workshop of both institutions to the topic of metabolic surgery in advance of the 2013 European Congress on Obesity held in Liverpool. This meeting was prompted by the extraordinary advancement made in the field of metabolic and bariatric surgery during the past decade. It was agreed to revise and update the 2008 Interdisciplinary European Guidelines on Surgery of Severe Obesity produced by focusing in particular on the evidence gathered in relation to the effects on diabetes and the changes in the recommendations of patient eligibility criteria. The expert panel allowed the coverage of key disciplines in the comprehensive

management of obesity and obesity-associated diseases, aimed specifically at updating the clinical guidelines to reflect current knowledge, expertise and evidence-based data on metabolic and bariatric surgery.

**Keywords** Interdisciplinary · European guidelines · Metabolic and bariatric surgery · IFSO-EC · EASO

## Introduction

The term “globesity” describes the worldwide epidemic that currently affects both developed and developing countries [1–3]. In 2008, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), 1.4 billion adults, 20 years of age and older, were overweight with an estimated 500 million adults worldwide being obese (over 200 million men and nearly 300 million

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M. Fried  
Center for Treatment of Obesity and Metabolic Disorders, OB  
Klinika, Prague, Czech Republic

M. Fried (✉)  
1st Faculty of Medicine, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic  
e-mail: docfried@volny.cz

V. Yumuk  
Division of Endocrinology, Metabolism and Diabetes,  
Istanbul University Cerrahpasa Medical Faculty, Istanbul, Turkey

J. M. Oppert  
Department of Nutrition, Heart and Metabolism Division,  
Institute of Cardiometabolism and Nutrition (ICAN), Pitie Salpetriere  
University Hospital (AP-HP), University Pierre et Marie Curie-Paris  
6, Paris, France

N. Scopinaro  
Medical School, University of Genoa, Genoa, Italy

A. Torres  
Department of Surgery Complutense University of Madrid, Hospital  
Clinico “San Carlos”, Madrid, Spain

R. Weiner  
Sachsenhausen Hospital and Center for Minimally Invasive Surgery,  
Johan Wolfgang Goethe University, Frankfurt/M., Germany

Y. Yashkov  
Obesity Surgery Service, The Center of Endosurgery and Lithotripsy,  
Moscow, Russia

G. Frühbeck  
Department of Endocrinology and Nutrition, Clínica Univ. de  
Navarra, University of Navarra, CIBERobn, Instituto de Salud Carlos  
III, Pamplona, Spain

women) [2–4]. In 2009–2010 in the USA, the age-adjusted prevalence of obesity was 35.5 % among adult men and 35.8 % among adult women [5] with the prevalence of obesity in children and adolescents being 16.9 % [6]. Noteworthy, the prevalence of obesity has tripled since the 1980s in many countries of the WHO European Region with overweight and obesity affecting 50 % of the population in the majority of European countries [2–4]. It has been estimated that 60 % of the world's population, i.e. 3.3 billion people, could be overweight (2.2 billion) or obese (1.1 billion) by 2030 if recent trends continue [7].

In spite of excess weight being considered the fifth leading risk for worldwide deaths according to the WHO, it has not been possible to successfully curb the obesity epidemic with more than 40 million children under the age of 5 being overweight in 2010 [3]. Moreover, severe obesity [i.e. a body mass index (BMI)  $>35$  kg/m<sup>2</sup>] represents a quickly growing segment of the epidemic in which the negative effects on health and disability are especially marked. In addition, obesity not only disproportionately affects the disadvantaged segments of the population, but these groups experience the most relevant increases in obesity prevalence. In the USA, individuals with a BMI  $>35$  kg/m<sup>2</sup> represent 15 % of the adult population [5]. Excess weight drastically elevates a person's risk of developing a number of non-communicable diseases, like diabetes, hypertension, stroke, dyslipidaemia, sleep apnoea, cancer, non-alcoholic steatohepatitis and other serious co-morbidities. The WHO emphasizes that 44 % of the type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) burden, 23 % of the ischaemic heart disease burden and around 7–41 % of certain cancer burdens are attributable to overweight and obesity [3, 4]. In the majority of European countries, overweight and obesity are responsible for about 80 % of cases of type 2 diabetes, 35 % of ischaemic heart disease and 55 % of hypertensive disease among adults [4]. In addition, a range of debilitating conditions such as osteoarthritis, respiratory difficulties, gallbladder disease, infertility and psychosocial problems, among others, which lead to reduced life expectancy, quality of life and disability, are extremely costly in terms of both absence from work and use of health resources [2, 4, 8, 9]. Noteworthy, the lifespan of severely obese individuals is decreased by an estimated 5 to 20 years depending on gender, age and race [10].

At present, approximately 65 % of the world's population inhabits countries where overweight and obesity kill more people than underweight [2–4]. The WHO highlights that obesity is responsible for 10–13 % of deaths in different parts of the region [2–4]. A systematic analysis with pooled data from 19 prospective studies adjusted for age, study, physical activity, alcohol consumption, education, and marital status, comprising 1.46 million White adults and over 160,000 deaths, showed that overall for men and women combined, for every five unit increase in BMI, a 31 % increase in risk of

death was observed [11]. A recent meta-analysis focusing on all-cause mortality with the inclusion of nearly three million people (and encompassing 270,000 deaths) reported that relative to normal weight all grades of obesity (i.e. a BMI  $>30$  kg/m<sup>2</sup>) and grades 2 and 3 obesity (i.e. a BMI 35–40 and  $>40$  kg/m<sup>2</sup>, respectively) were associated with significantly higher all-cause mortality [12].

Bariatric surgery has proven to be the most effective mode of treatment of the morbidly obese patients. Recent long-term studies provide evidence of a substantial reduction of mortality in bariatric surgery patients, as well as decreased risk of developing new health-related co-morbidities, together with decreased health care utilization and drop in direct health care costs [10, 13].

Bariatric surgery is an established and integral part of the comprehensive management of morbidly obese patients. These guidelines were created through the interdisciplinary effort of key opinion leaders from international medical and surgical societies (International Federation for the Surgery of Obesity (IFSO), International Federation for the Surgery of Obesity—European Chapter (IFSO-EC), European Association for the Study of Obesity (EASO)) [14]. The aim of the guidelines is to provide physicians, health care practitioners, health care policy makers and health care providers and insurance companies with essential elements of good clinical practice in the treatment of obesity.

Scientific evidence level data to support conclusions of this panel of experts were systematically obtained from databases such as Medline (PubMed) and the Cochrane Library.

Searches spanned from January 1980 until May 2013 and were carried out with the help of an expert in library science, together with a clinical expert with experience in systematic reviews.

The key search words were obesity, obesity surgery, morbid obesity, surgical treatment, bariatric surgery, morbid obesity surgery, gastroplasty, gastric bypass, gastric plication, intestinal bypass, Roux-en-Y, gastric banding, biliopancreatic diversion, duodenal switch, biliopancreatic bypass, obesity/morbid obesity treatment outcomes, obesity/morbid obesity follow-up, obesity/morbid obesity complications, nutrition and psychology. Some of the evidence level data were also retrieved from the following publications: Commonwealth of Massachusetts Betsy Lehman Center for patient safety and medical error reduction expert panel on weight loss surgery [15], Obesity surgery evidence-based guidelines of the European Association for Endoscopic Surgery [16], “Meta-analysis: surgical treatment of obesity” of Maggard et al. [17] and “Recommendations regarding obesity surgery” [18], “Clinical practice guidelines for the perioperative nutritional, metabolic, and nonsurgical support of the bariatric surgery patient—2013 update: cosponsored by American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists, The Obesity Society, and American Society for Metabolic & Bariatric Surgery” [19].

The recommendations of the panel are supported by the best available evidence, which includes all evidence levels (randomized controlled trials (RCTs), systematic reviews of cohort studies, observational outcomes studies and expert opinion). To grade the quality of evidence, the panel adopted “Oxford Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine” classification system based on levels of evidence and grades of recommendations according to the study designs and critical appraisal of prevention, diagnosis, prognosis, therapy and harm studies.

The Oxford classification system has four evidence levels (EL):

- Level A: Consistent RCT, cohort study, all or none, clinical decision rule validated in different populations
- Level B: Consistent retrospective cohort, exploratory cohort, ecological study, outcomes research, case–control study, or extrapolations from level A studies
- Level C: Case series study or extrapolations from level B studies
- Level D: Expert opinion without explicit critical appraisal or based on physiology, bench research or first experience/principles case reports

### Indications for Bariatric Surgery

Bariatric surgery is indicated to patients in age groups from 18 to 60 years having the following characteristics:

1. With BMI  $\geq 40$  kg/m<sup>2</sup>, EL A, B and C [14, 19–38]
2. With BMI 35–40 kg/m<sup>2</sup> with co-morbidities in which surgically induced weight loss is expected to improve the disorder (such as metabolic disorders, cardio-respiratory disease, severe joint disease, obesity-related severe psychological problems, etc.), EL A, B and D [39–44].
3. BMI criterion may be the current BMI or previously maximum attained BMI of this severity. Note that:
  - (a) Weight loss as a result of intensified treatment before surgery (patients who reach a body weight below the required BMI for surgery) is not a contraindication for the planned bariatric surgery
  - (b) Bariatric surgery is indicated in patients who exhibited a substantial weight loss in a conservative treatment programme but started to gain weight again, even if the required minimum indication weight for surgery has not yet been attained again
 

To be considered for surgery, patients should have failed to lose weight or to maintain long-term weight loss, despite appropriate surgical and/or non-surgical comprehensive medical care (EL B and D) [21, 38].
  - (c) Consideration should be given to reducing the BMI threshold by 2.5 for individuals of Asian genetic background and to the balance between genetic and

environmental/dietary factors

Patients should have shown their compliance with scheduled medical appointments.

### Bariatric Surgery and T2DM

Type 2 diabetes can be viewed as a reversible disease. Bariatric surgery is clearly confirmed to be beneficial in T2DM remission. Bariatric surgery contributes to improved beta cell function in patients with BMI  $>35$  kg/m<sup>2</sup> (EL A) [45–47]. (Note that throughout the guidelines there are different HbA1c cut-offs stated in certain sections/paragraphs. However, different cut-offs are pertinent to statements outlining different treatment outcomes, for example success of post-bariatric improvement of T2DM patients vs “partial” or “complete” remission in T2DM patients, etc.).

Surgically induced improvement of T2DM may be considered effective if:

- Post-operative insulin dose  $\leq 25$  % of the preoperative one
- Post-operative oral antidiabetic treatment dose  $\leq 50$  % of the preoperative one
- Post-operative reduction in HbA1c  $>0.5$  % within 3 months or reaching  $<7.0$  %.

Patients with BMI  $>30 < 35$  kg/m<sup>2</sup> with T2DM may be considered for bariatric surgery on an individual basis, as there is evidence-based data supporting bariatric surgery benefits in regard to T2DM remission or improvement (EL A, B, C and D) [48–60].

However, yet there is lack of high evidence level data to clearly support benefits of self-standing surgical treatment/control of glycaemia, dyslipidaemia and/or other metabolic diseases in patients with BMI  $>30 < 35$  kg/m.

### Bariatric Surgery in (Children)/Adolescents

Indication for bariatric surgery in adolescents and children could be considered in centres with extensive experience of such treatment in adults and who are able to offer a true multidisciplinary approach, which involves paediatric skills relating to surgery, dietetics and psychological management.

In adolescents with severe obesity, bariatric surgery can be considered if the patient has the following:

1. Has a BMI  $>40$  kg/m<sup>2</sup> (or 99.5th percentile for respective age) and at least one co-morbidity
2. Has followed at least 6 months of organized weight reducing attempts in a specialized centre
3. Shows skeletal and developmental maturity
4. Is capable to commit to comprehensive medical and psychological evaluation before and after surgery

5. Is willing to participate in a post-operative multidisciplinary treatment programme in a unit with specialist paediatric support (nursing, anaesthesia, psychology, post-operative care) (EL C and D [61–68]).

Bariatric surgery can be considered in genetic syndromes, such as Prader–Willi syndrome, only after careful consideration of an expert medical, paediatric and surgical team.

### Bariatric Surgery in Those Aged Above 60

The proof of a favourable risk–benefit must be demonstrated in elderly or ill patients before surgery is contemplated in such individuals. In elderly patients, the primary objective of surgery is to improve quality of life, even though surgery is unlikely to increase lifespan [69].

### Contraindications Specific for Bariatric Surgery

As follows are the contraindications for bariatric surgery:

1. Absence of a period of identifiable medical management
2. Patient who is unable to participate in prolonged medical follow-up
3. Non-stabilized psychotic disorders, severe depression, personality and eating disorders, unless specifically advised by a psychiatrist experienced in obesity
4. Alcohol abuse and/or drug dependencies
5. Diseases threatening life in the short term
6. Patients who are unable to care for themselves and have no long-term family or social support that will warrant such care.

Specific exclusion criteria for bariatric surgery in the treatment of T2DM are as follows:

1. Secondary diabetes
2. Antibodies positive (anti-GAD or ICA) or C-peptide <1 ng/ml or unresponsive to mixed meal challenge

### Patient Preoperative Evaluation

A decision to offer surgery should follow a comprehensive interdisciplinary assessment. The core team providing such assessment should optimally consist of the following specialists, experienced in obesity management and bariatric surgery:

- Physician,
- Surgeon,
- Anaesthetist,

- Psychologist or psychiatrist,
- Nutritionist and/or dietitian, and
- Nurse practitioner/social worker (EL B, C and D [16, 40, 70–77]).

Patients indicated for bariatric surgery should undergo routine preoperative assessment as for any other major abdominal surgery. Preoperative management should include assessment of general health and nutritional status (see below):

- Explanation of the dietary changes that are required after surgery,
- Optimizing treatment of co-morbidities to reduce the risks of the surgical procedure,
- Assessment of patient motivation and willingness to adhere to follow-up programmes,
- Ensuring that the patient is fully informed on the benefits, consequences and risks of the surgical options and the necessity of lifelong follow-up,
- Ensuring that the patient understands the potential (limited) outcomes of surgery,
- Ensuring that the patient can give truly informed consent including a statement on risks of the surgery and acceptance of lifestyle modification, including behavioural changes and follow-up compliance.

In addition to the routine preoperative assessment as for any other major abdominal surgery, the patient should undergo further assessment for (depending on the planned bariatric procedure and clinical status of the patient) the following:

- Sleep apnoea syndrome and pulmonary function,
- Metabolic and endocrine disorders, lipids, TSH, etc.,
- Gastro-oesophageal disorders (*Helicobacter pylori*, etc.),
- Bone density,
- Body composition, and
- Resting energy expenditure (EL A, B, C and D [16, 77–91]).

### Psychological Support

#### Preoperative Phase

Psychological assessment of behavioural, nutritional, familial and personality factors should be an integral part of the patient's preoperative evaluation (EL C) [92–98].

The purpose of the psychosocial evaluation for weight loss surgery is not merely diagnostic, but to enhance the safety and efficacy of surgical treatment by identifying areas of potential vulnerability, challenges and strengths, to create an individually tailored treatment plan.

Preoperative psychological evaluation should always include assessment of psychopathology such as personality

examination as well as assessment of his/her expectation/motivation, diet history, lifestyle (i.e. nutritional behaviour, physical activity habits, life conditions) and social support network. Preoperative evaluation enables identification of interventions that can enhance long-term compliance and weight maintenance (i.e. crisis intervention, psychological support, psychotherapy, etc.) (EL D) [99]. The goal is to enhance patients motivation and ability to comply with nutritional, behavioural and psychosocial changes before and after bariatric surgery. Preoperative examination leverages psychological support in case of patient's psychological disorder relapse postoperatively (depression, anxiety, etc.), EL C and D [100–103].

Pre-operative evaluation should detect potential psychological contraindications to surgery, such as severe eating disorders and others highlighted in the contraindication section.

### Post-operative Psychological Support

Eating pathologies, such as binge eating disorder, increase risk of lower weight loss and weight regain after some bariatric procedures (EL C) [104–109]. Presence of two and more psychiatric/mental disorders increases the risk of inadequate weight loss both after purely food restrictive as well as after metabolic type of procedures (EL B) [110–114].

Preoperative identification of psychological risk factors associated with lower postoperative compliance, inadequate weight loss, alcohol or drug dependencies, eating pathologies and others should lead to post-operative interventions through implementing a self-monitoring strategy in higher risk patients.

### Surgical Techniques Overview

In the past several years, better understanding of substantial metabolic changes induced by different surgical interventions to the alimentary tract was achieved. Therefore, the former classification of operations according to their influence on food ingestion, defined as limiting stomach capacity (restrictive), limiting absorption of nutrients (malabsorptive) or combined procedures does not appropriately reflect the current level of knowledge about early and weight-independent metabolic effects of these operations. Nowadays, most of the standard surgical interventions are being mostly referred to as metabolic operations. The focus when treating obese patients is gradually shifting from the primary goal of weight loss outcomes to the metabolic effects of the operations (EL A, B, C and D) [115–127].

Standard bariatric and metabolic procedures that are currently available for patients requiring weight loss and/or metabolic control are as follows:

- Adjustable gastric banding (AGB)
- Sleeve gastrectomy
- Roux-en-Y gastric bypass (RYGB)
- Biliopancreatic diversion (BPD)
- BPD/duodenal switch (BPD/DS)

Recent procedures in which long-term outcome data is not yet available include the following:

- Laparoscopic gastric plication in which infolding of the greater curvature of the stomach leads to tubularizing the stomach through intraluminal tissue fold. The current evidence on laparoscopic gastric plication for severe obesity raises no major safety concerns in short-to-medium term but more evidence is needed about the long-term efficacy of the procedure (EL B) [128–133].
- The “Omega loop gastric bypass” involves laparoscopic construction of elongated gastric pouch and a loop gastric bypass with distal diversion. Omega loop gastric bypass is so far controversial for its potential long-term risks. Most of the evidence on the omega gastric bypass comes from descriptive reports and case series, and more evidence based data is needed to enable appropriate evaluation of safety and efficacy of the procedure.

Procedures that are under investigation the following:

- Single anastomosis duodeno-ileal bypass with sleeve gastrectomy is a modified duodenal switch operation. This procedure is performed so far only in the Framework of Clinical Trials, and no wider spread of the procedure is recommended until evidence-based data are available. [134].

A strictly “investigational” approach is recommended for different “intestinal interposition” operations.

- Endoluminal innovative procedures.

The currently explored endoluminal novel procedural techniques, devices and technologies are in various stages of technical development, experimental or clinical application for both the primary or revisional treatment of obesity. Wide use of novel technologies has no evidence-based data support yet and should be limited to clinical trials conducted under ethical guidelines and under IRB approvals only.

However, it is expected that some of the investigational procedures will impact the future decision making in the treatment of obesity.

### Assigning a Patient to a Particular Bariatric Procedure

At this moment, there is insufficient evidence-based data to suggest how to assign a patient to a specific bariatric/metabolic procedure with no evidence in favour of any particular procedure.

A laparoscopic technique should be considered as the preferable approach to the operation, providing no contraindications for the laparoscopic approach are present (EL A) [135].

Among others, preoperative factors that could influence the choice of the type of operation are the following:

- BMI,
- Age,
- Gender,
- Body fat distribution,
- T2DM,
- Duration of T2DM
- Pre-op levels of HbA1c
- Multi-drug anti-diabetic treatment
- Fasting C-peptide levels
- Dyslipidaemia,
- Low IQ,
- Significant hiatal hernia,
- Gastroesophageal reflux disease,
- Patient's expectations/realistic goals
- Presence of eating disorders
- Presence of long-term treatment for a coexisting disease or condition for which absorption and pharmacokinetics are of major concern.

The expected average impact on improvement of metabolic status, improvement or remission of T2DM, weight loss and weight maintenance is increasing with the following procedures in the following order: AGB, LSG, RYGB, BPD/DS, BPD.

On the contrary, the surgical complexity and potential surgical and long-term metabolic risks of procedures decrease in reverse order (EL A, B, C and D [17, 30, 136–160]).

The early weight independent metabolic effects on HbA1c, LDL cholesterol, blood pressure, prevention and reduced cardiovascular risks of some of the procedures were already demonstrated in several studies; however, the exact mechanism of action of different surgical interventions has to be explored in detail and is not completely defined yet (EL A, B, C and D) [49–52, 161].

Better understanding of various mechanisms of action of these operations may contribute to personalized treatment and more precise assignment of different procedures to individual patients [162, 163].

The procedures should be performed at interdisciplinary obesity management centres with appropriately trained staff and adequate equipment (see above).

In all situations, the bariatric surgeon's experience is a key issue. It is not advisable to practise bariatric techniques on an occasional basis.

If the patient is expected to benefit more from a particular procedure not available in a specific centre, he/she should be

referred to a centre/surgeon with adequate bariatric experience in that procedure (EL B and D) [30, 164–170].

As a result of successful bariatric treatment with substantial weight loss, further treatment (such as plastic/reconstructive surgery) might be required.

### Follow-up

Morbid obesity is a lifelong disease. The treating physician and surgeon are responsible for the treatment of co-morbidities before the operation and for the follow-up after the operation.

Complementary follow-up pathways (surgical and medical) should be provided to all patients, ideally in part through interdisciplinary joint clinics. The surgeon is responsible for all possible short- and long-term events directly related to the operation.

The medical physician will be responsible for the long-term post-surgery follow-up and management of obesity and obesity-related diseases and operation-related non-surgical consequences. Treatment outcome is significantly dependent, among other factors, on patient compliance with long-term follow-up.

Patients attending support groups after bariatric/metabolic surgery show enhanced weight loss and other treatment outcomes, specifically in RYGB and gastric banding patients (EL C). Patients should be repeatedly educated about staged meal progression dependent on the time elapsed after surgery and based on the type of surgical procedure they underwent (EL A, B, C and D) [171–179]. Patients should also be informed that an excessive number and size of meals will probably result in lower weight loss.

They should be advised on the general importance of the following:

- Adequate protein intake in order to prevent excessive lean body mass loss,
- Avoidance of ingestion of concentrated sweets to prevent dumping syndrome, especially after RYGB and BPD,
- Preferable use of crushed and/or rapid release medication (EL B and D) [180, 181].
- The health benefits of regular physical activity/exercise that may need specific advice.

In case of T2DM patients, use of anti-diabetic medication and/or insulin should be with no delays adjusted post-operatively to minimize risks of hypoglycaemia.

Criteria for assessment of the effect of bariatric surgery on remission of T2DM [58] the following:

Partial remission	Hyperglycaemia below diagnostic thresholds for diabetes (HbA1c >6 %, but <6.5 %, FPG 100–125 mg/dl), at least 1-year duration, no active pharmacological therapy or ongoing procedures
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Complete remission	Normal glycaemic measures (HbA1c normal range (<6 %), FPG <100 mg/dl), at least 1-year duration, no active pharmacological therapy or ongoing procedures
Prolonged remission	Complete remission of at least 5-year duration

Criteria for assessment of effect of bariatric surgery on optimization of metabolic status and some other comorbid conditions [58] are HbA1c  $\leq$ 6 %, no hypoglycaemia, total cholesterol <4 mmol/l, LDL-cholesterol <2 mmol/l, triglycerides <2.2 mmol/l, blood pressure <135/85 mmHg, >15 % weight loss, or lowering of HbA1c by >20 %, LDL <2.3 mmol/l and blood pressure <135/85 mmHg with reduced medication from preoperated status.

In cases of postprandial hypoglycaemic symptoms, evidence for lowered blood glucose concurrent with symptoms should be looked for; patients should first be advised on dietary changes (low carbohydrate diets, regular meal times); second-line drug treatment may be considered, such as acarbose, calcium channel antagonists, diazoxide and octreotide (EL C) [182–186].

Special care must be taken for the following:

- The possible nutritional deficiencies, such as vitamin, protein and other micronutrients,
- Adjustments of medical treatments, specifically treatment of obesity-related co-morbidities, such as diabetes and hypertension, and avoidance of some types of pharmacotherapy (e.g. non-steroidal and steroidal antiinflammatory drugs), prevention of DVT and/or pulmonary embolism is recommended for all bariatric patients through LMW heparin subcutaneous administration, leveraged with use of T.E.D. stockings, early post-operative ambulating and intra- and post-operative use of sequential compression devices (EL B, C and D) [187–190].
- Early detection and adequate treatment of GI leaks in suspected patients (newly sustained tachycardia >120 pulses/min for at least 6 h, fever, tachypnea, newly established signs of hypoxia, increasing pain, elevated C-reactive protein) through UGI X-ray or CT studies. Surgical revision (laparoscopy or laparotomy) may be considered and is justified in case of highly clinically suspicious cases, despite non-presence of some of the symptoms and/or even in negative UGI studies (EL C) [191–194].

All patients after bariatric procedures require regular life-long qualified surveillance.

Patients must have access to 24-hour emergency service provided by the operating centre.

In case severe gastrointestinal symptoms are present and persistent (such as abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, change in stools, etc.) endoscopy and/or CT may be considered as the first

diagnostic/therapeutic option in order to evaluate potential presence of intestinal disease(s), bacterial overgrowth, ulcer disease, anastomotic problems, obstruction due to foreign body, etc.

The patient takes lifelong responsibility for adhering to the follow-up rules.

### Minimal Requirements for Follow-up After Food Limitation Operations

The patient should be provided with written information about the procedure and exact type of the received implant (if applicable) together with description of possible serious adverse effects.

- AGB
  - Follow-up during the first year should be at least every 3 months, starting 1 month postoperatively until a clinically satisfactory rate of weight loss is achieved, if necessary with repeated bandfills. Thereafter, follow-up should be at intervals of no more than 1 year
  - Follow-up should be carried out by the interdisciplinary team and should include dietary change/behavioural modification/physical activity interventions and encouragement as well as pharmacology support and surgical revision if appropriate.
  - Metabolic and nutritional status should be regularly monitored to prevent vitamin and mineral deficiencies and allow appropriate supplementation, as well as to monitor response to surgery and weight loss and adjust concomitant drug treatment,
  - Band adjustments should be performed according to the individual patient weight loss and the type of the implant,
    - First inflation according to the type of the band,
    - As a medical/clinical decision,
    - By trained medical or paramedical staff with adequate experience (such as surgeon, medical physician, nurse practitioner, dedicated radiologist)
  - Supplement of vitamins and micronutrients should compensate for their possible reduced intake
- RYGB
  - Checkup after 1 month, minimal follow-up every 3 months for the 1st year, every 6 months for the 2nd year and annually thereafter
  - Vitamin and micronutrient supplements (oral) should routinely be prescribed to compensate for their possible reduced intake and absorption
  - However, in addition, laboratory tests to evaluate the metabolic and nutritional status should also be carried out annually to include the following:
    - Fasting glucose (+HbA1c in diabetics), liver function tests, renal function, vitamin B<sub>1</sub>, B<sub>9</sub> (folates), B<sub>12</sub>, 25(OH)

- vitamin D3, ferritin, parathormone, albumin, Hb, Ca<sup>2+</sup>, checks, as well as basic blood cells, haemoglobin and electrolytes tests
- As a result of these tests, it may be necessary to correct deficits by first oral supplementation or even parenteral administration of vitamins and micronutrients
- In case of secondary lactose intolerance, supplement with oral lactase
- In case of early dumping syndrome, hydration before meals is advised and the use of corn starch and/or low glycaemic index food supplements considered
- In case of late dumping syndrome, hypoglycaemia should be considered and the patient assessed and advised accordingly.

### Minimal Requirements and Recommendations for Follow-up After Operations Limiting Absorption of Nutrients

- BPD
- Checkup after 1 month, followed by minimal follow-up every 3 months after the operation in the 1st postoperative year, every 6 months in the 2nd year, and annually thereafter
- Lab tests are necessary to evaluate the evolution of metabolic and nutritional status and to adapt supplementation and drug treatment accordingly
- Blood tests at 1, 4 and 12 months, thereafter annually, should be done for the following:
  - Liver function tests (GPT,  $\gamma$ -GT),
  - Complete blood cell count, complete blood electrolytes tests,
  - Minimal nutritional parameters should be vitamin B<sub>12</sub>, 25(OH) vitamin D3, parathormone, bone alkaline phosphatase, ferritin, Ca, pre-albumin, albumin, transferrin, creatinine, prothrombin time (PPT), etc.
- Urine examination
- Lifelong daily vitamin and micronutrient supplementation (vitamins should be administered in a water-soluble form)
  - Vitamins A, D, E and K
  - Calcium supplementation (preferably in food, Ca citrate, recommended total intake 2 g/day).
- Minimum advised protein intake of approximately 90 g/day
- In addition, supplement of vitamins and micronutrients should compensate for their possible reduced intake and absorption and according to lab values
- In a preventive regimen, the supplementation can be administered orally
- For correction of deficits, the supplementation can be administered parenterally, except for Ca

- Proton pump inhibitors/histamine 2 receptor antagonists for the entire first post-operative year.

In case of excessive bloating, flatulence and/or foul-smelling stools, the recommended treatments are oral neomycin or metronidazole or pancreatic enzymes (EL A, B, C and D) [18, 83, 195–220].

### Failed Treatment

To reinforce adherence to lifestyle changes and weight loss maintenance after bariatric surgery, regular contacts and life-long follow-up with the obesity management centre are usually required. Scientific evidence reveals that a certain number of bariatric patients will fail to lose weight or to maintain weight loss. If medically indicated and if such a patient is willing, further bariatric surgery should be considered (EL B, C and D) [221–234].

### Conclusion

All those who, on behalf of the scientific societies—the IFSO, IFSO-EC and EASO—partially rewrote and updated the former 2008 Interdisciplinary European Guidelines on Surgery of Severe Obesity realize that they have touched only basic issues of bariatric and metabolic surgery.

There are many other areas in this field that were deliberately left open or were not updated at this point. Among such areas are definitions of centres of excellence, bariatric surgeon's qualification and acceptance of the disease/reimbursement issues. These issues will be subject of the societies future work. The authors hope that these guidelines will improve both medical and surgical care of severely obese patients and will contribute to better outcomes and increased patient safety in the long term.

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on Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery and was still left unchanged in many parts.

**Conflict of interest** The authors have no conflict of interest.

**Disclaimer** The consensus material in this document is a clinical guideline. It is therefore intended to promote and guide good clinical practice. It should not be construed as a substitute for or as taking precedence over the duty of a clinician to conscientiously apply his/her knowledge and clinical skill to the best interests of a given patient. [235, 236].

It may thus be fully correct to offer or agree treatment out with this guidance. Clinicians may wish to document that they appraised patients clearly when proposing such treatment.

In applying this guidance, clinicians are advised in each case to consider the strength of evidence for any given part of it.

IFSO-EC and EASO are committed to promoting reliance on operationalized and controlled data.

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