



OBESITY HEALTH CENTRE

Are you ready to explore bariatric surgery

A 20 question self check

Bariatric and metabolic surgery can be an effective treatment for obesity and obesity-related health conditions. This self-check helps you think about five areas of readiness: your health, treatment history, knowledge and support, emotional and behavioural readiness, and the practical and financial commitments of lifelong care.

Choose the answer that best describes where you are right now. The aim is not to 'pass'. Your answers are conversation starters for you and your healthcare team.

Response scale

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

Important

This is an educational OHC self-check, not a validated clinical screening tool. A high score does not medically clear you for surgery, and a lower score does not exclude you. Suitability and readiness should be assessed individually by an experienced multidisciplinary bariatric team.

Name (optional)

Date

Health & medical readiness

Understanding my health, medication, medical assessment and pre-operative safety.

Questions 1-4

1

Am I ready to have my health properly assessed to find out whether bariatric surgery is an appropriate treatment for me

The decision should consider my overall health, weight history, obesity-related conditions and individual circumstances - not simply a number on the scale.

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

2

Am I prepared to tell the bariatric team about all the medication and products I use

This includes chronic prescription medication and any weight-loss medication, injections, over-the-counter products, supplements or herbal products - whether used with medical supervision or on my own.

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

3

Has a GP or another medical professional discussed bariatric surgery with me referred me or am I willing to discuss it with one

A previous referral is not required. What matters is being willing to have my health and treatment options properly assessed by an experienced healthcare team.

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

4

Am I willing to complete the medical tests consultations and risk reduction steps needed before surgery

This may include blood tests and other assessments, treatment of health conditions, and stopping smoking before surgery if this applies to me.

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

Area score

/ 8 Add the four question scores. You will transfer this to the score sheet at the end.

Weight history & treatment experience

Recognising my weight history and the long-term nature of obesity treatment.

Questions 5-8

5

Have I made genuine attempts to manage my weight but struggled to achieve results that last

I may have tried eating plans, exercise, lifestyle changes, professional support or medical treatment. I do not need to prove that I have "failed" every possible approach.

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

6

Have I experienced a repeated pattern of losing weight and then gaining it back

Repeated weight loss and regain can be part of living with a chronic, relapsing disease. I am ready to discuss a longer-term treatment approach rather than another short-term attempt.

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

7

Do I understand that obesity is a chronic disease and bariatric surgery is a medical treatment not a quick fix

The goal is broader health improvement. Surgery is a powerful treatment tool, but it remains part of long-term obesity care.

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

8

Am I ready to work with a dietitian and make long term changes to eating movement and daily habits

I understand that surgery does not replace nutrition, movement or behaviour change. I will need support to build habits that protect my health before and after surgery.

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

Area score

/ 8

Add the four question scores. You will transfer this to the score sheet at the end.

Knowledge & support

Becoming informed and building a support network around the bariatric journey.

Questions 9-12

9

Have I read reliable information about bariatric surgery or taken part in an information session or support group

I have started learning about what happens before surgery, the different procedures, recovery, possible risks, long-term eating and follow-up.

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

10

Do I know someone who has been through bariatric surgery or have I learned from real patient experiences

Knowing someone personally is not a requirement. Patient stories, support groups or structured education can help me understand the day-to-day reality of the journey.

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

11

Am I willing to learn about the different procedures their benefits risks and long term implications before making a decision

I understand that the best procedure is individualised and should be discussed with an experienced bariatric team.

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

12

Have I identified at least one person or source of support I can turn to during preparation and recovery

Support may come from a partner, family member, friend, support group, coach or healthcare professional. I am willing to ask for help when I need it.

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

Area score

/ 8 Add the four question scores. You will transfer this to the score sheet at the end.

Emotional & behavioural readiness

Exploring expectations, emotions, coping, habits and willingness to accept support.

Questions 13-16

13

Do I understand that choosing bariatric surgery does not mean that I have failed

Years of dieting, exercising, losing weight and regaining it do not measure my character or willpower. Needing medical treatment is not a personal failure.

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

14

If I feel shame desperation or believe surgery is my only way out am I willing to talk openly about these feelings with the bariatric team

Strong emotions can affect expectations and decision-making. Talking about them helps the team understand what support I may need before and after surgery.

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

15

Am I willing to talk honestly about my mental health eating behaviours expectations and coping strategies

Psychological support is not about passing or failing. It is part of preparing for changes in eating, identity, relationships, routines and emotional wellbeing.

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

16

Am I prepared to keep working on habits movement and my physical health over the long term

I am willing to build realistic routines and accept support with mobility, strength, physical activity and behaviour change at a level that is safe for me.

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

Area score

/ 8 Add the four question scores. You will transfer this to the score sheet at the end.

Practical financial & lifelong care

Planning for costs, logistics, follow-up, supplements and long-term care.

Questions 17-20

17

Have I considered the full financial commitment involved in bariatric surgery and long term care

I have thought about costs beyond the operation itself, including assessments, possible medical aid shortfalls, supplements, blood tests and follow-up care.

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

18

Have I researched my medical aid benefits and options or started exploring how I would fund treatment

I understand that cover depends on my specific plan, authorisation and scheme rules, and that I may need to plan for co-payments or alternative funding.

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

19

Have I thought realistically about the practical arrangements I may need before and after surgery

This may include transport, recovery time, help at home, time away from work or other responsibilities, and getting to follow-up appointments.

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

20

Am I prepared for lifelong follow up vitamins or supplements and regular health monitoring after surgery

I understand that bariatric care does not end when I leave hospital. Ongoing follow-up, blood tests, supplements and access to the healthcare team are part of protecting my long-term health.

- ☐ Yes (2 points)
- ☐ I'm not sure / I need to understand this better (1 point)
- ☐ No / Not yet (0 points)

Area score

/ 8 Add the four question scores. You will transfer this to the score sheet at the end.

Where do I need more homework

Your five area scores are more useful than the total score alone. The score boxes are linked to the five section pages, so you can enter each area score there or here. Then look for the areas where more information, planning or support would help you most.

7 to 8 Strong foundation

You appear well prepared in this area.
Keep asking questions.

4 to 6 More homework would help

Use your unanswered or uncertain
questions to guide your next conversation.

0 to 3 Priority discussion area

Spend time on this area before treating
the score as "ready".

Area	My score	What it suggests	My next homework step
1. Health & medical readiness Questions 1-4	/ 8	7-8 Strong 4-6 Homework 0-3 Priority	
2. Weight history & treatment experience Questions 5-8	/ 8	7-8 Strong 4-6 Homework 0-3 Priority	
3. Knowledge & support Questions 9-12	/ 8	7-8 Strong 4-6 Homework 0-3 Priority	
4. Emotional & behavioural readiness Questions 13-16	/ 8	7-8 Strong 4-6 Homework 0-3 Priority	
5. Practical, financial & lifelong care Questions 17-20	/ 8	7-8 Strong 4-6 Homework 0-3 Priority	

Optional total score

 / 40

The pattern across the five areas matters more than the total. This score is educational, not a clinical eligibility score.

My questions and next steps

Use this page to turn your score into a practical conversation with the bariatric team.

The area I most want to understand better is:

The three questions I want to ask the bariatric team are:

The person or service that could support me is:

My next responsible step is:

Remember

You do not have to prove that you have failed. Bariatric surgery is one possible medical treatment for a complex chronic disease. The next step is not to decide alone - it is to become informed and discuss your individual health with an experienced multidisciplinary team.