



OBESITY HEALTH CENTRE

Bariatric journey information pack

Your step-by-step guide to understanding the process, the team, the costs and what happens next

Welcome

Thank you for contacting Obesity Health Centre.

Considering bariatric surgery is a big and personal decision. It is normal to feel unsure, nervous, overwhelmed or hopeful — often all at the same time.

This information pack has been created to help you understand the bariatric journey in manageable steps. It explains what happens before surgery, who you will meet, what tests and consultations may be required, what the estimated costs are, what happens in hospital, and how long-term follow-up works.

You do not need to understand everything at once.

You do not need to decide today.

The first step is to understand where you are, what your health needs are, and what pathway may be appropriate for you.

Our team will guide you step by step.

Important notification

This information pack is for educational purposes only and does not replace personal medical advice.

Individual results and treatment pathways vary. Bariatric surgery and weight-loss medication may not be suitable for everyone. A medical assessment is required.

All costs in this pack are estimates and may change depending on your medical aid, authorisation, procedure, BMI, hospital stay, medical needs, additional tests and individual treatment pathway.



OBESITY HEALTH CENTRE

It's not just about surgery

Obesity care is about your health in total

We are a full care practice. We will guide you, and recommend the best obesity care treatment for you.

You have asked for information about bariatric surgery, but please understand that there are many options. Bariatric surgery is the most effective long-term treatment for obesity as a complex disease, but all options are important and available at our centre.



Wherever you enter the journey, our team will help you understand your options and guide you to the next responsible step.

Your Bariatric Journey

at a glance

A 10-step pathway designed to guide, support and empower you from your first enquiry to lifelong health.

- | | | | |
|----|---|--|---|
| 1 |  | Information & First Enquiry
You request information and receive your information pack. | Start your journey with knowledge and clarity. |
| 2 |  | Watch Surgery Information Videos
Watch the OHC surgery information videos before your first consultation and prepare your questions for the surgeon. | Be informed so your first consultation is focused on you, your health and your options. |
| 3 |  | Pre-operative Tests
Complete the required tests: bloods, ultrasound, chest X-ray, ECG. Sleep study if recommended. | These tests help the team understand your health and prepare for safe treatment. |
| 4 |  | First Round of Consultations
Meet the key team: surgeon, dietitian, GP/physician and psychologist. Assess health, history, readiness and options. | Comprehensive evaluation to understand your needs and plan your pathway. |
| 5 |  | Second Round of Consultations
Gastroscopy, follow-up consultations, dietitian review and family psychology session. Additional medical review if needed. | Final checks and support to ensure you are fully assessed and prepared. |
| 6 |  | Medical Team Review
The multidisciplinary medical team reviews your assessments together. Approval to proceed to surgery preparation. | A collaborative review to ensure the safest and most appropriate pathway for you. |
| 7 |  | Surgery Preparation
Surgery date confirmed (deposit may be required). Pre-operative diet and final preparation with your dietitian. | Preparing your body and mind for a safe procedure and the best possible outcome. |
| 8 |  | Surgery & Hospital Stay
Your procedure takes place. Supported by the surgical, medical, dietetic and physiotherapy team. | Expert care in hospital to support your surgery and recovery. |
| 9 |  | Recovery & Adjustment (12 Months Post-Op)
Regular follow-ups, nutrition support, movement, supplements and emotional support. Focus on healing, habit-building and adjustment. | The first year is crucial for building new habits and long-term success. |
| 10 |  | Long-Term Aftercare (Lifelong)
Ongoing follow-ups, monitoring and support. Supplements, healthy lifestyle and annual checks. | Lifelong partnership to maintain your health, confidence and quality of life. |



You are not alone on this journey.
Our team is with you every step of the way.

Meet your team

Before surgery, you may meet or be supported by several members of the bariatric team.

Reception and care coordination team

This team helps with bookings, information, documents, referrals, and guiding you through the practical steps. Your bariatric coordinator ensures your process is easy to follow and serves as your first stop for any questions or information.

Contact us: bariatrics@obesityhealthcentre.co.za



Hesme Kruger
Bariatric coordinator



Liza Kleynhans
General surgery coordinator



Lerina Erasmus
In-room procedures & authorisations

Bariatric surgeons: The surgeon assesses your suitability for surgery, explains procedure options, performs the surgery, and supports your surgical follow-up.



Dr Thinus Smit
General Surgeon with bariatric surgery



Dr Rouxzanne Roos
General Surgeon with bariatric surgery

Dietitians: The dietitians guide your nutrition before surgery, help you prepare for the pre-operative diet, support your eating phases after surgery, and assist with long-term nutritional success.



Francette Bekker
Bariatric dietitian



Nicola Drabble
Bariatric dietitian

Multidisciplinary medical team:

- The GP assesses your general health, screens and optimises co-morbidities, and helps ensure you are medically prepared.
- If your BMI is above 60, or if the GP identifies specific risk factors or uncontrolled health conditions, you may be referred to a physician for specialist assessment.
- You will meet the anaesthetist as part of the gastroscopy and/or surgery process. The anaesthetist assesses anaesthetic risk and supports your safety during procedures.
- The psychologist helps assess readiness, support emotional preparation and include your support system where needed.
- You may meet the physiotherapist in hospital and/or after surgery. Physiotherapy supports movement, recovery, strength and long-term function.

The medical team meets weekly to prepare patients for surgery and discuss next steps, ensuring all patients receive the best quality coordinated care. All the team members are informed about the patient's status.



Dr Esther Mowat
General Practitioner
Focused on obesity medicine
Coordinator facilitate appointments



Dr Yanila Nyasulu
Specialist Physician
Coordinator facilitate appointments



Dr. Tony Johns
Anaesthetist
Coordinator facilitate appointments



Dr Carin Human
Counselling psychologist
Make your own appointment



Magda Senekal
Physiotherapist
Make your own appointment

1 Information & First Enquiry

*Start your journey
with knowledge and clarity.*

Your journey begins with a simple step.
When you request information, we'll send you
a comprehensive information pack designed to
help you understand your options, what to expect
and how we can support you.

You are not alone. We are here to guide you.



You have asked for information. This is a VERY empowering first step. At this stage, you do not need to know whether bariatric surgery is right for you. You also do not need to have all your funding, medical aid, or appointment details worked out yet.

The purpose of this phase is to help you understand:

- what the process involves;
- who is part of the team;
- what tests may be required;
- what the estimated costs may be;
- what happens before and after surgery;
- what questions you should ask;
- what your next responsible step may be.

What should I do now?

Read this pack slowly.

Write down your questions.

Watch the surgery information videos before your first surgery consultation.

When you are ready, contact the practice to book your first step.

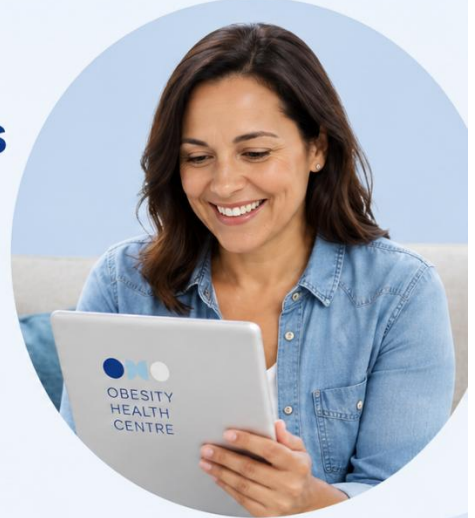
Website: www.obesityhealthcentre.co.za

2 Watch Surgery Information Videos

Be informed before your first consultation.

Watch the OHC surgery information videos before your first consultation and prepare your questions for the surgeon.

This helps you arrive informed and ready to focus on your health and your options.



Why do I need to watch the videos before seeing the surgeon?

Before your first consultation with Dr Thinus Smit or Dr Rouxzanne Roos, you will be asked to watch the OHC surgery information videos. These videos are provided for online viewing and are an important part of your preparation.

They help explain:

- the different bariatric surgery options;
- how each procedure works, and why your medical team recommend and decides on the type of procedure;
- the preparation for the procedure, and the role of the team members in the process
- medical aid approvals, costs and financing the surgery;
- the possible benefits of surgery;
- the risks and complications to understand;
- how surgery may affect eating, digestion and long-term health;
- post-op care, why follow-up and supplements are important;
- What questions to ask before deciding.

Why this step matters

Your first surgeon consultation is an important appointment. If you have already watched the videos, you can use the consultation to ask more specific questions about your own situation, rather than trying to understand everything for the first time. This helps the surgeon discuss:

- which procedure may be suitable for you;
- which procedure may not be suitable for you;
- how your BMI, health conditions and history influence the recommendation;
- what risks may apply to you;
- what you need to prepare for before and after surgery.

What should I do while watching the videos?

Bring these questions to your first surgeon consultation. As you watch, write down:

- anything you do not understand;
- which procedures you want to ask about;
- what worries you;
- what you want to know about safety;
- what you want to know about recovery;
- what you want to know about long-term eating and supplements;
- what you want to know about weight regain or long-term follow-up.

Important reminder

Watching the videos does not mean you have chosen surgery.

It simply helps you become informed before your consultation so that you can make better use of your time with the surgeon. Your final treatment pathway will still depend on your medical assessment, test results, multidisciplinary review and individual health needs.

3 Pre-operative Tests

*Knowledge today,
safety tomorrow.*

These tests help the team understand your health and prepare for safe treatment.

You'll be asked to complete:



Blood tests



Ultrasound

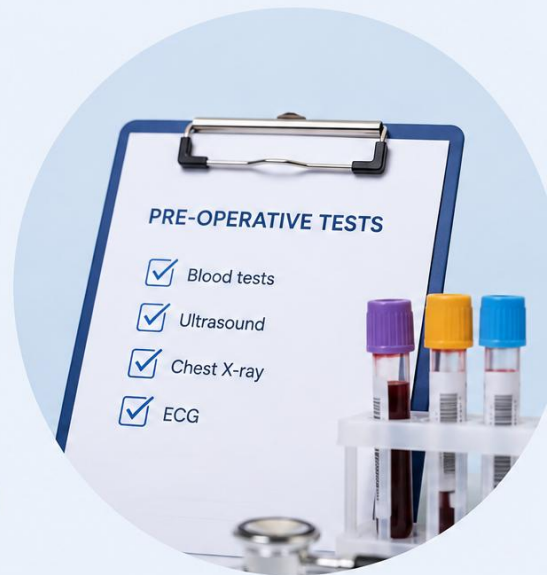


Chest X-ray



ECG

These assessments give us the full picture so we can plan the safest care for you.



Why are tests needed before the first consultations?

Pre-operative tests help the team understand your health status before you move further into the process. These tests can help identify risks, co-morbidities or concerns that need to be managed before surgery is considered. The aim is not to make the journey more difficult. The aim is to improve safety and preparation.

Tests are usually required before the first consultation

You may be asked to complete:

- Blood tests
- Abdominal ultrasound
- Chest X-ray
- ECG
- Sleep study

Possible additional test

A sleep study may be required for some patients, but only if the GP or physician refers you after your first consultation.

Important note

- ☐ These tests are not the consultation costs – they are the tests needed to inform your team about who does the consultations, and they must be completed BEFORE your first round of consultations.
- ☐ You can usually do these tests at a service provider near you, such as a blood laboratory or radiology practice.
- ☐ They do not have to be done at Zuid-Afrikaans Hospital unless specifically advised to do so.
- ☐ The reception team can help with the referral note.

More information on the pre-operative tests

Our partners do cost estimates. These costs are estimates and may vary depending on where the tests are done and whether your medical aid covers them.

Type of test	Instructions before the test	Why these tests?	Write in your estimated costs and dates.
Blood tests:	Do the test before 10:00 AM, fasting (i.e. no food from 22:00 the night prior)	To have accurate scientific markers of your health before the surgery to inform the medical decisions	
Abdominal ultrasound:	Do the test before 10:00 AM, fasting (i.e. no food from 22:00 the night prior)	To understand your internal physiology as best as possible before surgery to minimise risk.	
Chest X-ray:	Do the test before 10:00 AM, fasting (i.e. no food from 22:00 the night prior)	To understand your internal physiology as best as possible before surgery to minimise risk.	
ECG:	This is not a stress ECG, unless that need is identified in the first normal ECG.	To ensure you are fit for surgery from a cardio perspective.	
Gastroscopy	Fasting (i.e. no food from 22:00 the night prior), usually combined with your first surgical con.	To understand your internal physiology as best as possible before surgery to minimise risk.	
Sleep study, if required:	You will be admitted overnight or have a home-test set-up to sleep with the equipment monitoring your sleep and breathing.	Sleep apnoea severely influences the surgery and recovery process and needs to be treated before surgery.	

4 Phase 4 First Round of Consultations

Understanding today, planning tomorrow.

The first round of consultations helps the team understand your medical, surgical, nutritional and psychological profile.

Some consultations may be done online, but at least one visit to Pretoria is usually required for the GP or physician consultation and gastroscopy. Where possible, appointments can be coordinated on the same day.

Your first round may include:



These consultations help build the safest and most appropriate plan for your bariatric journey.



Phase 4: First round of consultations

The first round of consultations helps the team understand your medical, surgical, nutritional and psychological profile. Some consultations may be done online, but at least one visit to Pretoria is usually required for the GP or physician consultation and gastroscopy. Where possible, appointments can be coordinated on the same day.

1. First surgical consultation

You will meet with Dr Thinus Smit or Dr Rouxzanne Roos.

Before this appointment, you should have watched the surgery information videos provided by OHC. These videos explain the procedure options and help you prepare specific questions for the surgeon.

During the consultation, the surgeon will discuss:

- your health and weight history;
- whether bariatric surgery may be appropriate;
- which procedure options may be considered;
- what the benefits and risks may be in your case;
- what to expect from the bariatric journey;
- whether your gastroscopy can be done during the first or second consultation;
- any questions you noted while watching the videos.

Why this step matters

The surgical consultation helps ensure that surgery is carefully and responsibly considered.

Not every operation is right for every patient. The surgeon will help assess which approach may be safest and most appropriate for your individual situation.

The more prepared you are before this consultation, the more useful and personalised the discussion can be.

Your appointment schedule may include tests such as a gastroscopy, an EKG, or other tests. This will be added to your appointment schedule for either your first or your second visit, depending on your individual circumstances.

2. First dietitian consultation – the practice will schedule this appointment

You will meet with Francette Bekker or Nicola Drabble.

This consultation starts your personalised nutrition journey.

The dietitian will:

- explain the nutrition implications of different bariatric procedures;
- take your medical, weight and dietary history;
- discuss your goals and health objectives;
- help you begin sustainable behaviour changes;
- develop an individual eating plan suited to your needs and lifestyle;
- prepare you for the dietary changes before and after surgery.

Why this step matters

Nutrition is central to bariatric preparation and long-term success.

This step helps you begin building habits and understanding the changes that will be needed before and after surgery.

3. First psychological consultation – make your own appointment

You will meet with Dr Carin Human. You will make your own appointment for this process.

This process will take at least 4 weeks, with a minimum of two appointments over the 4 weeks.

The first psychology consultation is usually individual.

The second consultation is usually a family meeting to ensure adequate support for you through the process.

Why this step matters

Bariatric surgery affects more than the body.

It can influence eating patterns, emotions, identity, relationships and daily routines. Psychological assessment and support help you prepare for the changes ahead and identify what you may need.

4. First GP or physician consultation

You will meet with Dr Esther Mowat or, where needed, Dr Yanila Nyasulu.

The GP will assess and help optimise co-morbidities.

If your BMI is above 60, you will automatically be referred to a physician rather than your GP. You may also be referred to the physician if the GP identifies specific risk factors or concerning health conditions.

Why this step matters

Bariatric surgery must be approached with a clear understanding of your health risks.

This step helps ensure that conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, sleep apnoea, heart risk, reflux or other health concerns are assessed and managed before surgery is considered.

Estimated cost of pre-operative consultations

We understand that funding the surgery is a barrier to treatment, and we intentionally engage with our practice and partners to address contracted medical aid rates where possible. We provide the costs in a separate document as these are updated frequently. We also have a financial investment information explainer. Please ensure you read and understand your full options.

These are the elements that you need to obtain an estimate for. The exact list of tests and costs may vary depending on your medical aid, whether consultations are claimed, whether additional appointments are needed, and your individual pathway.

- ☐ Surgical consultation
- ☐ Gastroscopy surgeon fee:
- ☐ Gastroscopy anaesthetist fee
- ☐ First psychology session
- ☐ Family psychology session
- ☐ First GP consultation
- ☐ Second GP consultation, if needed
- ☐ First dietitian consultation and eating plan
- ☐ Second dietitian consultation
- ☐ Surgery preparation dietitian consultation
- ☐ Physician consultation, if needed
- ☐ Second physician consultation, if needed
- ☐ Physiotherapist evaluation, optional

Estimated total pre-operative consultation cost, excluding the physician if not required: approximately R20 000 – R25 000.

Important notes

- ✓ If your medical aid does not cover bariatric surgery, it may still cover a gastroscopy done in rooms, depending on your plan and scheme rules.

- ✓ If your BMI is above 60, you will automatically be referred to the physician instead of the GP.
- ✓ If the GP identifies uncontrolled or concerning health conditions, you may also be referred to the specialist physician.



5 Second round of consultations

Progress today, clarity tomorrow.

Some patients will need a second round of consultations.

This phase helps finalise information, check progress and prepare for multidisciplinary team review.

This phase may include:






Gastroscopy Second dietitian consultation Second psychology consultation Second GP or physician consultation, if needed

These consultations help us confirm the full picture so we can plan the most appropriate next step for you.



Phase 5: Second round of consultations

Some patients will need a second round of consultations.

This phase helps finalise information, check progress and prepare for multidisciplinary team review.

1. Gastroscopy

A gastroscopy may be done in rooms with Dr Thinus Smit or Dr Rouxzanne Roos.

You may not need a second surgical consultation if the gastroscopy was already done during your first consultation.

Why this step matters

A gastroscopy helps the team examine the upper digestive tract and identify issues that may affect the choice of procedure, planning, or safety.

2. Second dietitian consultation

Your second dietitian consultation is used to check your progress.

This can be an online consultation if you live outside of Pretoria.

Remember, the goal is not necessarily to lose weight before surgery.

This process is to empower you to have a healthy lifestyle post-surgery that is sustainable for the rest of your life.

It prepares you for the pre- and post-surgery phases, as well as a lifetime of good health habits.

The dietitian may:

- ☐ review progress against the goals set in your first session;
- ☐ assess how you are coping with dietary and behaviour changes;
- ☐ identify barriers or challenges;
- ☐ adjust your eating plan if needed;
- ☐ Set updated goals for your pre-operative preparation.

Why this step matters

This consultation helps you stay on track before surgery and provides support as you begin making practical changes.

3. Second psychology consultation

The second psychology consultation is usually a family consultation.

Why this step matters

Bariatric surgery affects the home environment, too.

A family or support-person session helps those close to you understand the journey, the changes ahead and how best to support you.

4. Second GP or physician consultation, if needed

A second GP or physician consultation is not always required.

You will only need this if the GP or physician indicates that follow-up is needed after the first consultation.

Why this step matters

If additional medical concerns are identified, this step allows the team to optimise your health before surgery preparation continues.

6 Multidisciplinary team review

*Review today,
confidence tomorrow.*

Once your assessments are complete, the multidisciplinary team reviews your case.

This review helps the team decide whether:



This review brings your medical, nutritional, psychological and surgical information together so the team can make a safe, well-informed decision.



Phase 6: Multidisciplinary team review

What happens during the team review?

Once your assessments are complete, the multidisciplinary team reviews your case.

This review helps the team decide whether:

- you are ready to move forward;
- more information or tests are needed;
- any risks need further management;
- the proposed procedure is appropriate;
- your surgery date can be confirmed;
- Medical aid authorisation can be started.

Why this step matters

The multidisciplinary team review is an important step in safety and quality.

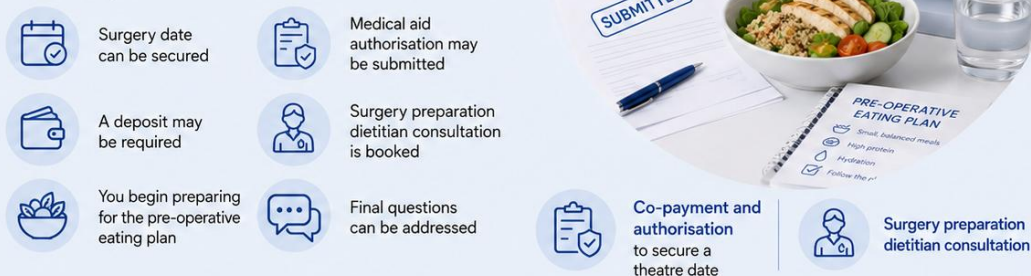
It ensures that surgery is not considered in isolation. Your medical, nutritional, psychological and surgical information is reviewed together.

7 Surgery preparation

*Preparation today,
confidence tomorrow.*

Once the multidisciplinary team has reviewed and approved your assessments, your surgery date may be confirmed.

At this stage:



How long does the preparation process take?

Most patients are ready for surgery within 6 to 12 weeks.

The average time from initial consultation to surgery is approximately 8 weeks.

This timeline may vary depending on:

- your health needs
- test results
- medical aid authorisation
- appointment availability
- whether additional specialist input is needed
- your readiness for surgery

Good preparation helps secure a smoother path to surgery.

Phase 7: Surgery preparation

Once the multidisciplinary team has reviewed and approved your assessments, your surgery date may be confirmed.

At this stage:

- your surgery date can be secured;
- medical aid authorisation may be submitted;
- a deposit may be required;
- your surgery preparation dietitian consultation is booked;
- you begin preparing for the pre-operative eating plan;
- final questions can be addressed.

Co-payment and authorisation to secure a theatre date

You will need authorisation from your medical aid to confirm the theatre date.

A co-payment may be required to secure your theatre date.

Private patients will have to pay their full quoted fee to confirm the theatre date.

Depending on your medical aid plan, the co-payment will be confirmed during the authorisation process.

Surgery preparation dietitian consultation

You will book your third dietitian consultation with Nicola Drabble or Francette Bekker.

This consultation helps prepare you for the dietary changes immediately before and after surgery.

The dietitian will:

- assess your readiness for surgery;
- review your nutritional status;
- check your understanding of dietary changes;
- guide your pre-operative diet;
- explain the post-operative dietary progression;
- answer final nutrition-related questions.

Why this step matters

The final dietitian consultation helps prepare your body and your routine for surgery and recovery.

It is an important step in supporting safety, healing and long-term success.

How long does the preparation process take?

Most patients are ready for surgery within 6 to 12 weeks.

The average time from initial consultation to surgery is approximately 8 weeks.

This timeline may vary depending on:

- your health needs;
- test results;
- medical aid authorisation;
- appointment availability;
- whether additional specialist input is needed;
- your readiness for surgery.

With guidance from your dietitian, you will usually start your pre-operative diet 2 weeks before your surgery date.

8 Surgery and hospital stay

Care today, recovery tomorrow.

All bariatric procedures are usually done laparoscopically. The expected theatre time and hospital stay depend on the procedure.

What happens in hospital?

SADI or Roux-en-Y gastric bypass



Theatre time:
approximately 3 hours



Hospital stay:
usually 2 nights

Sleeve gastrectomy



Theatre time:
approximately 90 minutes



Hospital stay:
usually 1 night

During your hospital stay, you may be visited by:



the surgeon



physician or medical team,
where relevant



dietitian



physiotherapist



Bariatric-approved meals
provided during your stay



Discharge plan
clear guidance
after surgery



Returning to work

Many patients can expect to return to work after approximately 2 weeks, depending on recovery and the type of work they do.

During your stay

The dietitians train the hospital catering team, and you will receive bariatric-approved meals during your stay. When you are discharged, you will receive a clear plan from your team on what to do after surgery.



Your hospital stay is a supported step toward recovery.

Phase 8: Surgery and hospital stay

What happens in a hospital?

All bariatric procedures are usually done laparoscopically. The expected theatre time and hospital stay depend on the procedure.

SADI or Roux-en-Y gastric bypass

Theatre time: approximately 3 hours

Hospital stay: usually 2 nights

Sleeve gastrectomy

Theatre time: approximately 90 minutes

Hospital stay: usually 1 night

During your hospital stay, you may be visited by:

- the surgeon;
- physician or medical team, where relevant;
- dietitian;
- physiotherapist.

The dietitians train the hospital catering team, and you will receive bariatric-approved meals during your stay.

When you are discharged, you will receive a clear plan from your team on what to do after surgery.

Many patients can expect to return to work after approximately 2 weeks, depending on recovery and the type of work they do.

Funding and medical aid

Care today, recovery tomorrow.



Medical aid

Some medical aid plans may cover a portion of the bariatric surgery pathway.



Suitable plans may cover a significant part of the procedure, but co-payments may apply.



Medical aid cover depends on your specific plan, authorisation and scheme rules. If you are on a suitable plan, such as certain comprehensive plans, you may still be responsible for co-payments.



The practice sends a full motivation to your medical aid, and will assist you as far as possible to obtain authorisation (we do charge a fee for compiling these motivations, as they are specific and a medical administrative option, please see estimate).



Other possible funding routes

If you are not on a suitable medical aid plan or if you do not want to upgrade your plan, you may explore other options. These may include:



medical aid authorisation, where applicable



managing the co-payments via your budget/cashflow



structured financing plans such as overdrafts/credit cards



membership of the Obesity Community Fund



medical credit companies



personal loan options



Obesity Community Fund

The Obesity Community Fund may be an option for patients seeking alternative access routes. It is a member-based co-funding option.

 You can read more here: www.obesitycommunityfund.co.za



Important note

Funding options depend on your circumstances, affordability, eligibility and the requirements of the relevant funder or organisation.

The OHC team can guide you on where to start, but each patient remains responsible for understanding and confirming their own financial commitments.

We are here to support you on every step of your journey.



9

Recovery and long-term aftercare

*Your journey continues.
We're with you for life.*

Why follow-up matters

Regular follow-up helps us monitor your health, support your lifestyle changes, and ensure long-term success.

Post-operative appointments



One-week
follow-up



Three-month
follow-up



Six-month
follow-up



Twelve-month
follow-up



Annual
follow-ups



We are committed to supporting you
every step of the way – for life.



Phase 9: Recovery and long-term aftercare

Will I still see the bariatric team after surgery?

Yes.

Ongoing care is essential.

Bariatric surgery is a powerful treatment tool, but it is only one part of a longer health journey. Follow-up helps protect your progress, monitor your health and support your adjustment after surgery.

Why follow-up matters

Regular follow-up helps the team:

- monitor your progress;
- identify complications early;
- support your nutritional needs;
- monitor supplements;
- adjust your eating plan;
- support movement and physical rehabilitation;
- offer emotional and behavioural support;
- help manage weight regain if it occurs;
- support long-term quality of life.

Post-operative appointments

Your aftercare – at home and at the practice – is a key to success.

These are estimated costs and may vary depending on your pathway, medical aid and individual needs.

One-week follow-up

Surgeon consultation: not billed

Dietitian consultation:

Three-month follow-up

Blood tests to determine your medical markers post-surgery

Gastroscopy surgeon's fee

Anaesthetist fee

Dietitian consultation

Six-month follow-up

Blood tests to determine your medical markers post-surgery
GP consultation
Dietitian consultation

Twelve-month follow-up

Blood tests to determine your medical markers post-surgery
Gastroscopy surgeon's fee
Anaesthetist fee
Dietitian consultation

Annual follow-ups

Blood tests to determine your medical markers post-surgery
GP consultation
Dietitian consultation



Supplements after surgery

Lifelong support for lifelong health.

Vitamin and mineral supplementation is a crucial part of your health journey after bariatric surgery.

Daily vitamin and mineral supplements should be taken lifelong to help prevent micronutrient deficiencies.

Your team will review your diet, blood results, symptoms and recovery to adjust supplementation based on your individual needs. Please do not change your supplements without speaking to the team.

Key points to remember:



Lifelong use



Individual plan



Blood results



Team review

Consistent supplementation helps support recovery, health and long-term success.



Supplements after surgery

Will I need supplements?

Yes. Vitamin and mineral supplementation are a crucial part of your health journey after bariatric surgery.

Daily vitamin and mineral supplements should be taken lifelong to help prevent micronutrient deficiencies.

Your team will review your diet, blood results, symptoms, and recovery to adjust supplementation based on your individual needs. Please do not change your supplements without speaking to the team.

Estimated supplement costs

In the recovery phase, usually 12 to 18 months after surgery, supplements may cost up to approximately R2 000 per month. Lifelong supplementation continues, and the monthly cost will depend on your individual needs and blood results.



Frequently asked questions

Helpful answers for your bariatric journey.

We know you may have questions before, during, and after bariatric surgery. This FAQ section is here to provide clear, reliable information to help you feel informed and confident every step of the way.

If you can't find the answer you're looking for, our team is always here to help.

Topics we cover:



Before surgery



During surgery



Aftercare & recovery



Nutrition & lifestyle



Common concerns



Informed today. Empowered for tomorrow.
We're with you for lifelong health.

Your questions answered

Who do I contact if I have healthcare concerns after surgery?

During working hours, contact the relevant member of the bariatric team.

For example:

- contact the surgeon if you are worried about your wound or recovery;
- contact the dietitian if you are unsure about nutrition or your eating plan;
- contact the GP for general medical questions.

If you experience a medical concern outside working hours, the Emergency Department at Zuid-Afrikaans Hospital is available to assist with urgent issues or admissions.

What if I have non-healthcare concerns after surgery?

Adjusting to life after bariatric surgery involves more than physical healing.

It is a complete lifestyle shift that can bring emotional, social and mindset challenges.

If you need support beyond medical care, speak to the team.

We have a bariatric coach, patient support groups and the full team available to support you on this journey.

Additional coaching or counselling support may help with:

- building new habits;
- managing expectations;
- staying motivated;
- adjusting to body changes;
- navigating relationships;
- dealing with emotional or social changes.

Will I lose hair after surgery?

Some hair loss is common in the months after bariatric surgery.

It usually happens around 3 to 6 months after surgery and is usually temporary.

Hair loss can occur as your body adjusts to rapid weight loss and reduced energy intake. Your body also prioritises healing and vital organs during this phase.

To support healthy hair regrowth:

- attend follow-up appointments;
- take your recommended supplements;
- eat enough protein;
- follow your dietitian's guidance;
- Speak to the team if hair loss seems excessive or prolonged.

Can I get pregnant after bariatric surgery?

Yes, many people experience improved fertility after bariatric surgery, especially if they previously had conditions such as PCOS or irregular cycles.

However, pregnancy after bariatric surgery should be carefully planned.

It is recommended to plan pregnancy for 12 to 18 months after surgery, or ideally 2 years, when weight has stabilised, and the risk of nutritional deficiencies is lower.

Your GP or physician will discuss suitable contraception with you.

What should I do if I become pregnant after surgery?

Please contact the bariatric team immediately.

You will need close nutritional monitoring during pregnancy.

The team may arrange:

- blood tests to assess key nutrients;
- consultation with the GP or physician;
- dietitian support for a healthy pregnancy;

follow-up visits during pregnancy.

What kind of diet will I follow?

Your dietitian will guide you through each phase.

Before surgery

Initial phase

You will follow a low-energy, low-fat, balanced eating plan, personalised to help you make sustainable changes before surgery.

Two weeks before surgery

You will follow a soft, light diet for 7 days to help reduce liver size.

One week before surgery

You will transition to a full liquid diet for 7 days to further prepare your digestive system.

In hospital

You will be on a clear liquid diet immediately after your operation.

After surgery

Weeks 1 to 2

Full liquid diet to support healing.

Weeks 3 to 4

Pureed or sloppy consistency diet.

Weeks 5 to 6

Soft, light diet as tolerance improves.

Beyond 6 weeks

You return to a balanced eating plan adjusted for smaller portions and your new nutritional needs.

This becomes your long-term bariatric diet.



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What are the next steps?



What are the next steps?

Step 1

Read through this pack.

Step 2

Watch the surgery information videos provided by OHC.

Step 3

Write down your questions for the surgeon and the wider team.

Step 4

Contact the OHC team to book your first consultation or ask for help with the next step.

Website: www.obesityhealthcentre.co.za

Step 5

Complete the required pre-operative tests if you are ready to begin the process.

Step 6

Move through the consultations and assessment pathway with the team.

You do not need to manage the process alone. We will guide you step by step.

Final reminder

Bariatric surgery is not the easy way out.

It is a medical treatment for a complex chronic condition.

It requires assessment, preparation, commitment and long-term follow-up.

The OHC team is here to help you understand your options and take the next responsible step.