

Weight Loss Surgery – Is It Right for You? By Merle Cantor Goldberg, LCSW, George Cowan, Jr., MD and William Y. Marcus.

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Weight loss surgery has become so popular that practically everyone knows someone who's had it. There are magazines, television programs and internet websites devoted to weight loss surgery. While not as common as appendectomies, it's no longer mysterious or extraordinary. That's good news for those considering the surgery or who've had it. There's no shortage of information about the surgery and all issues surrounding the surgery.

Sorting through all of the information and getting the straight scoop on the entire wls experience can be a daunting task. "Weight Loss Surgery – Is It Right for You?" by Merle Cantor Goldberg, LCSW, George Cowan, Jr., MD and William Y. Marcus is an comprehensive resource for everyone, whether you are pre-or post surgery. The book is organized in four parts: "Deciding if Weight Loss Surgery is Right for You," "Your Journey from Presurgery to Recovery," "Your Future-Thin and Healthy for Life," and "For Friends and Family." There is something for everyone.

Part One, devoted to making the decision includes a discussion of obesity, qualifying for the surgery and making the decision that's right for you.

Once the decision is made, Part Two: "The Journey from Presurgery to Recovery" is an invaluable resource. Don't know how to find a surgeon? Don't really understand what kinds of surgery are available and which one is right for you? Concerned about insurance coverage? Apprehensive about your hospital stay? Worried about telling your friends and family? Feeling all alone facing the surgery? This book answers all of those questions and more.

The book walks you through all of your appointments with your medical team – the surgeon, nutritionist, mental-health specialist. It demystifies all of the pre-surgery tests. Some insurance companies require a letter from the patient stating why they want the surgery. The book offers a sample letter. There are suggested questions for your prospective surgeon. There's a checklist with twenty-six tasks ranging from shopping for post-surgery supplies to updating your living will, to making housekeeping arrangements. No detail is too small.

The authors provide down-to-earth advice on talking about your surgery with your family, friends and co-workers as well as how to find support before and after the surgery. And, the emotional facets of the surgery are spelled out in detail. (We're all

familiar with the “last ‘normal’ meal” syndrome and they acknowledge it with compassion.)

Google is part of our lives and there’s lots of information on the internet about wls. Unfortunately, some of the advice and information is bad or just plain misleading and harmful. “Weight Loss Surgery” offers a series of questions to help you evaluate websites.

Part Three, “Your Future” is an honest discussion of exercise, body image and relationships and how they are affected after surgery. It offers encouragement without preaching or resorting to clichés about loving yourself.

Part Four, “For Family and Friends” is unique in it’s’ scope. No matter how well-meaning family and friends are, they may be at a loss for how to be supportive. This section is exacting in its advice. It is a must-read for all patients and their families.

This is a must-have reference book for all wls patients and their families.