

March 09, 2012 | By Jackie Carr

New Weight Loss Surgery Folds Stomach into Smaller Size

Patients seeking a weight-loss surgery that does not require an implanted device or permanent change to their anatomy, have a new clinical trial option at UC San Diego Health System. Santiago Horgan, MD, chief of minimally invasive surgery, and his team, now offer gastric plication, a novel surgery that folds the stomach into a smaller, more compact size.



“This minimally invasive surgery is a new choice for patients who are more than 30 pounds overweight,” said Horgan, director of the UC San Diego Bariatric Metabolic Institute. “By folding the stomach, we can reduce the volume by 70 percent. Patients can expect to lose up to 2 pounds per week following the procedure.”

Horgan compares gastric plication, a way to fold the stomach into a new functional form, to the art of origami. Gastric plication is potentially reversible and is performed laparoscopically. During a one-hour procedure, one to five small incisions are made in the abdomen to reach the stomach to place the folds. Depending on the size of the patient’s stomach, one or two folds are created with non-absorbable sutures.



Santiago Horgan, MD, chief of minimally invasive surgery, UC San Diego Health System.

“After surgery, with a smaller stomach size, a patient feels fuller faster and is likely to have an actual decrease in appetite,” said Horgan. “If, for some reason, we need to return the stomach to its original size, we can do so. Also, since the patient’s anatomy is not rerouted, the patient does not have severe food restrictions.”

Horgan said that, in addition to weight loss, many surgery patients see an associated benefit in reducing their blood pressure, diabetes and depression medications. These long-term results are a product of a combination of surgery, healthy eating and exercise.

Gastric plication offers a short hospitalization of one to two days with a return to normal activities in one week. Candidates must have a BMI of at least 27.

The UC San Diego Bariatric Metabolic Institute is dedicated to the science of developing and offering an array of surgical and non-surgical weight loss techniques that are customized to the patient's individual needs. A team of internationally recognized surgeons and specialists provide patients a comprehensive long-term plan to improve their health and lifestyle. Learn more at bmi.ucsd.edu.

This clinical trial surgery was performed by Horgan as well as Garth Jacobsen, MD, and Nikolai A. Bildzukewicz, MD, of UC San Diego Health System.

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