

Gastric band adjustment

What is a gastric band adjustment?

Your surgeon has inserted an adjustable band around the upper part of your stomach to limit and control your hunger. There is a small port (sealed opening) attached to the band. This port is just under the skin which you may be able to feel. Fluid can then be injected or withdrawn to adjust the size of the band. This enables you to feel satisfied sooner, and the feeling lasts longer. Your band is usually first adjusted 6-8 weeks following surgery. It will then be adjusted as needed after that. Subsequent band adjustments may be done in the X-ray Department if needed but usually by the bariatric specialist nurse at your clinic appointment. You may need a number of adjustments before the band is adjusted to the right pressures for you.

Risks and benefits...

The benefit of this procedure is that it will help you lose weight without requiring further surgery. You should ideally be achieving a weight loss of 0.5-1kg (1-2 pounds) each week. You should reach your target weight over a period of approximately two years. It is a safe and quick procedure and does not require admission to hospital. This procedure can be performed in the x-ray department to check if there are any problems, such as an enlarged gastric pouch, or whether the band has slipped or is leaking.

There are no major risks to this procedure.

Sometimes, the band is unable to be tightened because the port has moved into a position that can't be accessed. If the band is too tight you may vomit or feel that the food gets stuck. If the band is too loose you may notice that you are not losing much weight and are feeling hungry.

There is a very small risk of infection at the port site which can usually be treated with antibiotics but in some cases requires port and band removal.

What happens on the day of my appointment?

If your appointment is in x-ray, you must not have any food for four hours before your procedure and no drink for two hours before your procedure. If your appointment is with the bariatric specialist nurse, please do not have anything to eat or drink for an hour before. If your appointment is in x-ray, please come to the X-ray Reception on Level 2 at

the time of your appointment. If you are late, it may not be possible to carry out your procedure and it will have to be rebooked.

Before the procedure

In the X-ray Department you will be seen by a doctor who will discuss the procedure with you. Please ask any questions you may have as it is important that you understand what is going to happen. If you are female it is advised that you don't get pregnant for 12 months after your band was inserted. However, please let us know if there is a chance you could be pregnant before your procedure.

During the procedure:

X-ray adjustment

In the procedure room you will lie on a special x-ray table. The area over your port (usually just below your breastbone) will be cleaned with antiseptic fluid. The doctor will give you an injection of local anaesthetic to numb the skin over the port site. This will cause some stinging initially, then the area will go numb. Throughout the procedure a nurse will be with you. The procedure should not cause you any pain but please let the nurse know if you feel any discomfort. Using the x-ray machine, the doctor will place a special needle into the port. When the needle is in place, the doctor will ask you to drink a special drink (called barium) which will show up on the x-ray pictures. We can then see how much the band needs adjusting. The doctor will insert some fluid through the needle into the band so that the drink will move through the band slowly. It is important to let the doctor know if you feel any discomfort while swallowing at this point.

The procedure usually takes about 15 minutes, but may take longer.

Nurse adjustment

You may also have your gastric band adjusted by the bariatric specialist nurse during your clinic appointment. The procedure is similar to having it done in x-ray except you will not need to drink the barium or have an x-ray. The nurse will decide how much fluid to add or remove after discussing your levels of hunger, any symptoms you have and your rate of weight loss with you.

Immediately after the procedure

You will be required to stay in hospital for about 30 minutes. During this time you will need to eat something. Please bring some food from home that is of yoghurt-like consistency. If the band is too tight, please come back to the X-ray Department or let the nurse know straight away. If you have no problems swallowing, then you may go home.

Going home...

It is important that you follow the advice from your dietitian regarding what to eat. We recommend that you eat a pureed meal the evening of your procedure, then the following day you should be able to eat your normal diet. If you are having problems with vomiting, try reducing your portion size at meal times, ensure you are chewing your food well, and eat slowly. There are some foods that you will find it best to avoid. These are different for everyone; for example, bread and some types of meat. If you are still having a problem with vomiting, your band may be too tight. Remember to keep taking small sips of water so you don't get dehydrated.

Please ring the Centre for Diabetes and Endocrinology and ask to speak to one of the obesity team for advice. The department is open from 9am until 5pm, Monday to Thursday and Friday 9am until 11am. If a problem occurs over the weekend and you are unable to take sips of water, please go to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department.

To contact the obesity team via Centre for Diabetes and Endocrinology, telephone: 0118 322 8109 /8811. Email the Bariatric Nurse at katharine.hallworth-cook@royalberkshire.nhs.uk

For more information about the Trust, visit our website www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

This document can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.

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