For Obese Teens, A Radical Solution: Stomach Surgery

Tough Medicine

For Obese Teens, a Radical Solution: Stomach Surgery

The Daily Journal

By Marc Bass

Most insurers are refusing to cover weight-loss surgery. Instead, they are pressuring doctors to prescribe drugs that help patients lose weight, even though the drugs are untested for long-term effectiveness.

According to a report by the Institute of Medicine, 8 million American adults are severely obese, defined as having a body mass index of 30 or higher. The study found that obesity is linked to a range of serious health problems, including diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and some forms of cancer.

"It's a scary picture," said Dr. Thomas W. Rollins, a professor of surgery at the University of California, San Francisco. "We're seeing a lot of patients who are developing these complications at a younger age than we used to." He added that many of these patients are now suffering from severe complications, such as heart disease and diabetes, that were previously rare in people of this age.

Ms. Grill, who lost 100 pounds through a combination of diet and exercise, said she was attracted to the idea of gastric surgery because it was a "cure-all" for her weight problem. "I was tired of being overweight and I wanted something that would work," she said.

The surgery, called a Roux-en-Y gastric bypass, involves creating a small pouch in the stomach and connecting it to the small intestine. The procedure is designed to reduce the amount of food a person can eat and to limit the absorption of calories.

Ms. Grill had the surgery in 2002 and has lost 100 pounds. "I feel great," she said. "I can eat whatever I want and I'm not hungry all the time."

The procedure has become increasingly popular in recent years, with an estimated 50,000 to 60,000 surgeries performed annually in the United States.

However, the procedure is not without risks. In about 5% of cases, patients die from complications such as infection or internal bleeding. In addition, some patients experience severe side effects, such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.

Despite these risks, Ms. Grill said she would recommend the surgery to anyone who is considering it. "I can't believe how much my life has changed," she said. "I'm happy and I feel great."

The procedure has also been shown to have long-term benefits. A study published in the New England Journal of Medicine found that patients who had the surgery were able to maintain their weight loss for up to 10 years.

Ms. Grill said she is now able to eat smaller portions and to enjoy the food she once shunned. "I can eat whatever I want and I don't feel guilty," she said.

The surgery has also been shown to improve other health problems, such as diabetes and high blood pressure.

Ms. Grill said she is grateful for the surgery and would recommend it to anyone who is considering it. "I'm happy and I feel great. I can't believe how much my life has changed," she said.

The procedure is not without risks, however, and patients should carefully weigh the benefits and drawbacks before making a decision.

For more information on gastric surgery, Ms. Grill recommends visiting the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery website at www.asbs.org.

She added that she plans to continue to eat healthy and to exercise regularly, and to continue to monitor her weight.

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U.S. Ex-Aide Had Boeing Ties

Controversy From Page 1

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Ms. Druyun has nothing to do with

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Year-earlier quarter, Silicon Graphics cut its fiscal second-quarter revenue estimate and gave a further 600 jobs, or nearly 17% of its workforce. The company said it planned to cut another 600 jobs and workstations, said it planned to cut another 600 jobs and workstations, 15,400,000 San Jose, CA

Motorola to Split Off Chip Unit

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motors, said it planned to cut another 600 jobs and workstations, 15,400,000 San Jose, CA

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Motorola is still working out details of the planned offering, including what stock exchange it will go public on, who will manage the offering, and when. The

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