

WEIGHT LOSS SURGERY

NAAFA'S OFFICIAL POSITION:

There is a lack of conclusive evidence that gastrointestinal surgery for weight loss increases longevity or improves overall health. There are a tremendous number of deaths and severe complications associated with weight-loss surgeries. 40.4% of weight loss surgery patients return to the hospital with some complication within three years of surgery, as reported in the October, 2005 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association. One in 50 people die within 30 days of undergoing weight loss surgery, according to a study out of the University of Washington in 2005. Since non-invasive treatments for co-morbidity factors exist, the presence of co-morbidity factors is not a valid justification for surgery. Therefore, the National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance condemns gastrointestinal surgery for weight loss under any circumstances. NAAFA believes that the psychosocial suffering that fat people face is more appropriately relieved by social and political reform than by surgery.

NAAFA ADVOCATES:

- The introduction, passage, enactment, and enforcement of local, state, and federal legislation which limits or controls the weight loss surgery industry.
- That all gastrointestinal weight loss surgeries be discontinued.
- That private, commercial, or government third party payers discontinue payment of any weight loss surgery.
- That surgeons not perform variations of existing surgical procedures or new weight loss operations on human subjects.
- That friends and family of fat people offer emotional support and advise anyone considering weight loss surgery to carefully examine the hazards and complications of such surgeries.
- That all patients be required to undergo psychological counseling before having weight loss surgery performed.

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NAAFA RESOLVES TO:

- Educate the public regarding the hazards, side effects, mortality rate, and long-term ineffectiveness of gastrointestinal weight loss surgeries.
- Provide emotional support to patients who have already undergone gastrointestinal weight loss surgeries.
- Provide information and emotional support to fat people considering gastrointestinal weight loss procedures to assure that such a major medical decision is based on "informed consent".
- Represent past and potential patient's interests at medical gatherings on gastrointestinal weight loss surgery and, whenever possible, present an educated alternative viewpoint at such conferences
- Promote HAES as a viable alternative to weight loss surgery.