Follow-Up Visits Aid Weight Loss After Surgery

BY HEIDI SPLETE

WASHINGTON — Successful weight loss for patients who undergo gastric banding is significantly associated with the number of follow-up visits to a surgeon's office during the first year after the procedure, according to a study involving 113 adults who had gastric band surgery between 2005 and 2007.

Gastric band surgery can be a safe and effective strategy for weight loss, but studies have shown that the percentage of excess weight lost after the procedure ranges from –8.5% to 79% after 1 year, said Dr. Julio Teixeira of St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital in New York.

To identify predictors of weight loss 1 year after gastric band surgery, researchers reviewed baseline demographics, body mass index, comorbidities, number of office visits, and gastric band adjustments for up to 15 months after the procedure. The single center findings were presented in a poster at the annual meeting of the Obesity Society.

The patients ranged in age from 22 to 71 years, with an average age of 41 years. The patients' BMIs ranged from 36 to 72 kg/m^2, with an average of 47 kg/m^2. Approximately 91% of the patients were women; 32% were white, 43% were black, and 25% were Hispanic.

Participants had an average of six follow-up visits to a surgeon's office during the first year after the procedure. There was a significant correlation between the number of follow-up visits and both the amount of weight lost and the percentage of excess weight lost. ■

Disclosures: *Dr. Teixeira has served as an adviser to Allergan, which manufactures an adjustable gastric banding system.*