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Marina S. Kurian, MD
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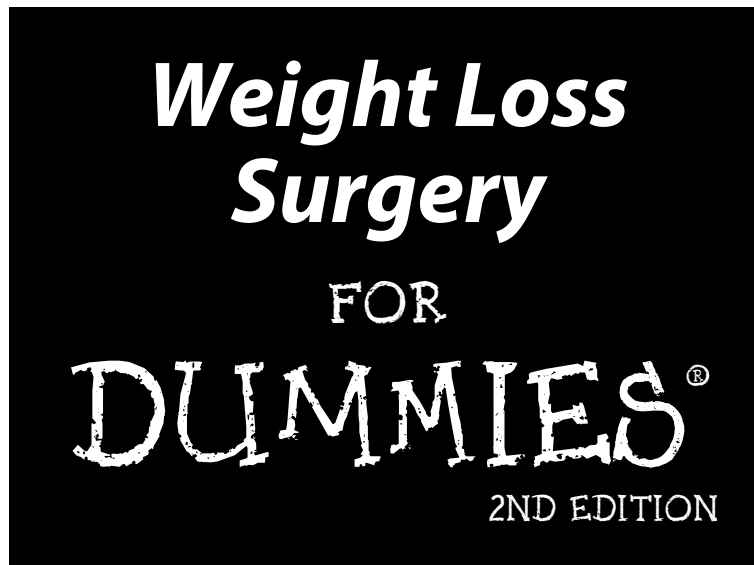


*Weight Loss
Surgery*

FOR

DUMMIES[®]

2ND EDITION



**by Marina S. Kurian, MD, Barbara Thompson,
and Brian K. Davidson**

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NBC Weatherman and Television Personality



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About the Authors

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Barbara Thompson: Barbara Thompson is a gastric bypass patient, author, and professional speaker. She battled a weight problem from the day she was born. When she finally admitted to herself in her late 20s that her "baby fat" was turning into a serious problem, she began dieting earnestly, only to diet her way to severe obesity. Over her adult life, Barbara experienced the very common pattern of losing weight, regaining it, and adding a few additional pounds. When her weight reached 264 pounds and a herniated disk in her back was causing her to face disability, she knew she was in trouble. She decided to have the life-altering gastric bypass surgery in January 2000 at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

Today, Barbara is a national speaker on weight loss surgery, obesity sensitivity, and getting control of your life. She is the author of *Weight Loss Surgery: Finding the Thin Person Hiding Inside You*. She hosts the patient website www.wlscenter.com; the Facebook group WLS Private; and her blog, www.weightlosssurgeryblog.net.

Barbara is a past chairman of the board of the Obesity Action Coalition, a member of the American Society of Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Corporate Council, and a member of the National Speakers Association. She lives in Pittsburgh with her husband, Frank, and daughter, Erin. You can contact her through www.wlscenter.com.

Brian K. Davidson: Brian is the coauthor of *Weight Loss Surgery Cookbook For Dummies*. Brian has been featured on television, spoken at various industry events, and consulted with leading industry professionals and patients. He has authored several articles for the weight loss surgery community. He is a passionate advocate and dedicated to improving obesity awareness and increasing public education for this devastating disease. Brian lives in Connecticut and is the proud father of his daughter, Grace, and son, Riley. You can contact him at bk311d@gmail.com.

Dedication

This book is dedicated to everyone who is afflicted with the disease of severe obesity. It is dedicated to all those who have tried to diet and failed over and over again, only to find themselves gaining more and more weight. It is also dedicated to the families of those with this disease, in the hopes that they will find understanding and a way to offer support. It is our desire that you find information and hope within the covers of this book.

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The authors are indebted to David Fouts, bariatric chef and weight loss surgery patient, for submitting all the recipes for this book, which are designed to help the weight loss surgery patient not only adjust to a new way of eating but learn to enjoy a healthier way of life. David is the author of *Culinary Classics: Essentials of Cooking for the Gastric Bypass Patient*. His website is www.chefdave.org.

From Marina:

I have a personal mantra that I will share. Every day, I wake up and try to do better. Part of that means doing work at night after my “day job” is over. My family makes concessions and excuses all the time. My kids think it’s great that I do all this “stuff” but would love for me to just hang out and be available to them. To my family, I say, “You make me better and in a cruel twist make me want to do more. Because you make me happy and ground me, I am able to stretch and reach for the highest branches.” To my patients who have trusted me to take care of them, who continue to see me (because it really is lifelong care), who teach me about resiliency in the face of adversity, who show me there is always a way, who have lifted me on my down days, I thank you. I have immense job satisfaction because of you all. Not everyone can be so lucky.

From Barbara:

I am indebted to the thousands of patients I have met in my travels and at speaking engagements. They have inspired me beyond words with their courage and newfound love of life. And to the many surgeons and healthcare professionals who work with these patients — I have never met a more compassionate and caring group of people who love what they are doing. I am especially indebted to Dr. Phil Schauer, now at Cleveland Clinic, who performed my surgery and has remained a lifelong friend.

And to my husband, Frank. I could not do what I do if it weren't for his love, support, guidance, and patience. His chapter in my first book addressed to significant others has helped thousands of families understand what patients go through and how they can provide loving support. And to the delight of my life, my daughter, Erin. I bless the day that she came into my life.

From Brian:

I would like to give a special thanks to my parents, Myrna and Bob. To my children, Grace and Riley, who inspire me with the beauty of their spirit, compassion, joy, and love. To all those who have helped me along this wonderful journey, thanks from the bottom of my heart.

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Foreword

I sometimes tell people that Dr. Marina Kurian gave me my life back. I have struggled with my weight my entire adult life. I dieted my way to a low of 185 pounds in the mid 1970s and went up and down through the –'80s and –'90s till I topped out at 325 pounds during the 2002 Winter Olympics. By then I had decided to have gastric bypass surgery and was scheduled for the procedure with Dr. K., as I like to call her, in March 2002.

It wasn't a decision I made lightly. I researched the procedure on the Internet, I spoke with bypass patients, and I interviewed eight different doctors before I came to make this choice.

My surgery has been a great success, but one that comes with a price. This book is a great help to those who are considering the surgery, as well as their family and friends. It explains the various procedures, the risks, the possible complications, and what goes on after you've started losing weight. I wish it had been out when I had my surgery.

I have always been very careful when talking about the surgery. I have never endorsed it, and in only a couple of cases have I ever recommended it. I do, however, recommend this book, only because of the people who are behind it.

Weight Loss Surgery For Dummies is really for smart people who want to make an intelligent, informed choice.

Al Roker
NBC Weatherman and Television Personality
New York, New York

Introduction

You've probably heard a lot about weight loss surgery in the media, with celebrities going public about their stories. Reporters may have used words like *extreme* or *dangerous* to describe the surgery. Maybe you were online and saw before and after pictures of a patient. The pictures were motivating, and you thought, "Wouldn't it be nice to be the after picture for a change?"

But those pictures leave a lot of questions unanswered. How did the patients do it? How did they decide what procedure or surgeon was best for them? Did they have any struggles or complications? How long have they kept the weight off? What was their secret?

Answering those questions is what *Weight Loss Surgery For Dummies*, 2nd Edition, is about. In this book, you'll find the truth about weight loss surgery. We take the mystery out of deciding whether the operation is right for you, and we show you how to become that person in the after picture.

About This Book

Weight loss surgery is not a magic potion that miraculously takes off the pounds forever. Although it may be the right choice for some, it isn't for everyone. Weight loss surgery is a life-changing procedure, so if you're thinking about going through it, you should have a solid understanding of what will take place and what you'll need to do to live well after the procedure. Before you head into the operating room, you also should be aware of complications that may occur after your surgery. Your surgeon will provide you with a tool — your surgery — to assist you in leading a slimmer and healthier life. Making that tool work through behavior modifications, a healthy eating plan, exercise, and emotional support is up to you. This book empowers you to make the best choice for you.

Conventions Used in This Book

Here's an overview of the conventions we use in this book:

- ✔ Occasionally we use technical or medical terms that you may not be familiar with. Any new terms are *italicized* and are followed with an explanation in parentheses.
- ✔ E-mail and web addresses appear in `monofont`, so you can easily spot them. **Note:** When this book was printed, some web addresses may have needed to break across two lines of text. If that happened, rest assured that we haven't put in any extra characters (such as hyphens) to indicate the break. So, when using one of these web addresses, just type in exactly what you see in this book, pretending as though the line break doesn't exist.
- ✔ All vegetarian recipes (recipes without meat) are flagged with a 🌱.

In this second edition of the book, we use the term *severe obesity* instead of *morbid obesity*. Both terms have been used interchangeably for years, but the term *morbid obesity* carries more of a negative bias, so we've opted not to use it here.

Foolish Assumptions

If you're interested in this book, we've made a few assumptions about you:

- ✔ You or someone you love suffers from severe obesity and related physical complications.
- ✔ You're interested in finding out more about weight loss surgery and whether it's the right choice for you.
- ✔ You've tried to lose weight through diets, exercise, popular weight loss programs, and perhaps even diet drugs — all to no avail. You've felt shame and despair after each failed attempt.
- ✔ You've already had weight loss surgery and you're looking for a resource to maintain your weight loss and successfully manage all the post-op challenges.
- ✔ Being obese has posed serious social, family, or lifestyle obstacles and has become central to your identity.
- ✔ You're tired of sitting back and watching life pass you by. You're ready to reach out and grab life by the horns.
- ✔ You're looking for a permanent solution for your weight problem and a healthier future.