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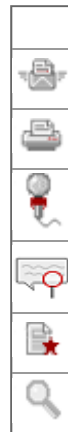
MIRROR BUZZ

city

Bring fat under mediclaim: Docs

Obesity Surgery Society of India has written to the Union Health secretary to treat obesity as a serious illness

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Santosh Andhale 

The numbers cause concern, especially since it's World Obesity Day. An estimated 130 to 140 people in the city have resorted in the past year to obesity surgery to lose weight and the ailments that accompany it. Raising concern is the fact that most of them are young adults belonging to 20 to 25 years age group, and say difficulty in getting marriage alliances and plummeting self-esteem lead them to the surgeon's table.



Concerned by the growing trend of obesity and the high costs involved in combating it, the Obesity Surgery Society of India (OSSI) has written to the Union health secretary to take steps to make treatment of the disease affordable.

An estimated 130 to 140 people in the city have resorted in the past year to obesity surgery to lose weight and the ailments that accompany it

Obesity brings along with it susceptibility to other ailments such as heart attacks, sleep apnea and severe diabetes.

Obesity surgery, which is often the last resort to a person crippled by the disease, costs lakhs of rupees. In addition, the procedure is done only in leading hospitals in the metros and medical insurance does not cover it.

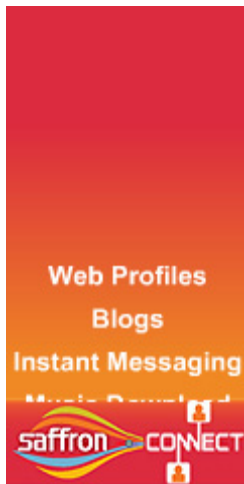
Which is why OSSI has requested the government to cover the treatment in mediclaim, and also help fund the operation for patients who are not economically capable of doing so themselves.

Says Dr Sanjay Borude, obesity surgeon at Breach Candy Hospital and vice-president of OSSI, "After the surgery, we have noticed that



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patients are cured of ailments that accompany it, such as diabetes and arthritis. A lot more people want to undergo the procedure, but are unable to do so because of their economic status. This is why we've written to Health secretary P Hotta to ensure that government insurance companies cover it in their policy."

"In November, I conducted surgeries on 10 patients, all of whom opted for it because they were finding it difficult to get married," says Borude.

Other than setting up funds and covering operation costs under medical policies, the OSSI also wants the government to reduce duty charges for the Obteck band that is currently procured from the US. "The band used in Gastric Binding, a type of obesity surgery, costs Rs 1.25 lakh," says Raman Goyal, the obesity surgeon at Bombay Hospital.

*** "Post-surgery, patients are cured of ailments. Many more people want to undergo the procedure, but are unable to do so because of their economic status."**

— Dr Sanjay Borude, obesity surgeon, Breach Candy Hospital

I GOT RID OF WEIGHT, DIABETES

Case Study



Mitali Parekh (name changed) weighed 170 kgs. After undergoing obesity surgery she lost 70 kgs in two months

Fifty-seven-year-old Mitali Parekh (name changed) suffered from severe diabetes, arthritis and sleep apnea when she weighed 170 kgs. She also found it difficult to be go anywhere, and was mostly confined to her home in Tardeo. Parekh also found it difficult to move from one room to another within her home. Due to sleep apnea, it was difficult for her to lie down and sleep as her back would hurt.

After undergoing obesity surgery last year at Breach Candy Hospital, she is one happy woman.

Not only has her diabetes disappeared, as is apparent from glee with which she announces it, she also has no trouble sleeping.

"It was the happiest moment of my life. I lost 70 kgs in two months," says Parekh. "My arthritis is also gone. I can go anywhere I want and eat anything I choose."

Dr Sanjay Borude who operated on Parekh says, "When she came in, her condition was very bad. Her sugar level was very high and we had to bring it under control by administering insulin before the surgery. But after gastric binding, she is absolutely fine."

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