Bariatric Surgery: Addressing Health Disparities Through a Literature Review and Case Study
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Abstract

Introduction: Bariatric surgery is currently the most effective treatment for morbidly obese individuals. Individuals with a BMI greater than 40 or a BMI greater than 35 with two obesity-related comorbidities are candidates for bariatric surgery. A racial disparity exists among obese individuals as well as those who undergo bariatric surgery. There is a higher prevalence of obesity in the non-Hispanic Black and Hispanic population and bariatric surgery has been shown to be less effective in these two populations in terms of percent excessive weight loss. To improve bariatric surgery outcomes in these populations each patient needs to be assessed thoroughly and accurately, before and after surgery, to develop an individualized plan for long-term weight loss. The patient also needs to be provided with the nutrition education and resources to achieve their goals.

Objective: Appropriately assess a patient who underwent bariatric surgery using the nutrition care process and address health disparities associated with bariatric surgery.

Methods: A literature review of recently published articles discussing comparisons between different bariatric surgeries and potential complications, dietary guidelines, disparities associated with the procedure, interventions to improve long-term weight loss, changes in quality of life, and comorbidities post surgery was done. An interview of the patient and medical team was completed for the clinical case study and the patient's readiness for change was assessed.

Case Study: A 30-year-old African American female patient who underwent a laparoscopic sleeve gastrectomy in September 2015. A full nutrition assessment was completed. A sample menu was created for this patient and she was given nutrition education materials.

Conclusion: Effective nutrition therapy for bariatric patients’ needs to be individualized based on current evidence-based data with a goal of long-term improvement in nutritional status.