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BMI and Surgery

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BMI (Body Mass Index) and Surgery.

Your surgeon has booked your surgical procedure at the Bacchus Marsh and Melton Regional Hospital (BM&MRH). You have been asked to complete a patient health questionnaire, which includes your height and weight.

BMI is calculated by dividing weight in kilograms by height in metres squared. For example if your weight is 60kg and height 1.65m, your BMI is 22.1. This is within the healthy weight range.

BMI is only one of the tools used to assess fitness for surgery at BM&MRH. Past medical and surgical history, general level of health and the type of surgery to be done is also taken into account.

Patients with an increased BMI have a greater risk of developing complications during and after surgery which may require specialised care. BM&MRH is a small regional hospital with no Intensive Care, Coronary Care or High Dependency Unit. Access to these facilities is 40-50 minutes away in Ballarat or Melbourne.

In the interest of patient safety, the hospital has a policy that anyone whose BMI is above 40 is unable to have a procedure requiring anaesthetic (general/regional) or sedation (this includes obstetric patients). Some minor procedures may be possible under local anaesthetic.

Patients whose BMI is 35 - 40 will be assessed at the Pre-admission clinic (PAC) prior to surgery and may also need review by an anaesthetist before being passed as fit for surgery.

If your BMI is above 40 and you wish to lose weight to for your surgery at BM&MRH please discuss this with your surgeon and the PAC nurses. We advise that you consult local doctor and dietitian prior to starting any weight management plan. Dietary advice can also be accessed through the dietitian at our Melton Health campus.

If your BMI is above 40 and you wish to have surgery elsewhere, please discuss this with your surgeon and local doctor.

The BM&MRH urges all patients to maintain a healthy weight and lifestyle. There is a correlation between raised BMI and the onset of problems such as coronary heart disease, stroke, sleep apnoea, diabetes, high blood pressure and some forms of cancer.

The World Health Organization uses the following table to demonstrate the progressive risk of developing chronic health problems as BMI increases.

BMI Score

Less than 18.5	Underweight	Low/average risk
18.5—24.9	Normal Weight	Average risk
25—29.9	Overweight	Increased risk
30—34.5	Obese	Moderate risk
35—39.9	Moderately Obese	Severe risk
Greater than 40	Morbidly Obese	Very severe risk

