PROJECT INFORMATION

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Testing a Decision Aid to Help Patients Choose between Two Types of Bariatric Surgery

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What was the research about?

Some people with severe obesity can't lose enough weight with diet and exercise to improve their health. Two types of surgery can help these people lose weight. Each type has different health risks and lifestyle impacts. For example, after one type of surgery, patients may only be able to eat certain foods or only small amounts of food.

In this study, the research team wanted to learn if a web-based decision aid improved satisfaction and health outcomes for people considering two types of bariatric surgery. Decision aids help people choose between healthcare options based on what's important to them. In the first part of the study, the team compared patients who used the decision aid with patients who didn't. In the second part, the team revised the decision aid and tested it again with more patients.

What were the results?

Patients who used the original decision aid and patients who didn't had similar

- Satisfaction or regrets with their decision
- Weight loss
- Mental well-being
- Number of health issues related to their weight
- Overall satisfaction with care

In the second part of the study, patients who used the revised decision aid had fewer regrets about their surgery decision than patients who didn't use it. Patients who used the revised decision aid said it was more helpful than patients who used the original.

Who was in the study?

The first part of the study included 878 patients considering bariatric surgery at clinics in Michigan. Of these patients, 79 percent were white, 20 percent were black, 3 percent were American Indian or Alaska Native, and 3 percent were another race. The average age was 44, and 80 percent were women.

The second part of the study included 9,294 patients. Of these, 72 percent were white, and 28 percent were nonwhite. The average age was 45, and 84 percent were women.

What did the research team do?

In the first part of the study, the research team assigned patients by chance to use the decision aid or not. To use the decision aid, patients entered personal traits, such as age, weight, and health problems. The decision aid then showed tailored information based on their personal traits about benefits and harms for each type of surgery, such as the amount of weight loss or the chance of having problems. Patients completed surveys before using the decision aid and again 3 and 12 months later.

In the second part of the study, the research team compared a group of patients who used the revised

decision aid with a group who didn't. Patients took the same surveys before using the decision aid and again three months later.

Patients, caregivers, and doctors helped create the decision aid.

What were the limits of the study?

The second part of the study didn't assign patients by chance to groups. The differences between groups may be due to factors other than the decision aid.

Future research could continue looking at ways to help patients choose a type of bariatric surgery.

How can people use the results?

Doctors can use the results when considering how to support patients making decisions about bariatric surgery.

To learn more about this project, visit www.pcori.org/Ghaferi333.