

FAQ: ORBERA

Who is eligible for ORBERA?

The device is used in obese adults with a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 30 to 40 kg/m², who have been unable to lose weight through diet and exercise.

Who is NOT eligible for ORBERA?

You are not eligible for Orbera if you have had prior stomach or bariatric surgery, including hiatal hernia repair, lap band, or gastric bypass.

You are not eligible if you use anti-inflammatory medications (such as aspirin or ibuprofen) on a daily basis.

You are not eligible if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Does Insurance cover it?

No, insurance does not cover the ORBERA[®] balloon, but we offer financing options.

Why doesn't insurance cover it?

At this time, it is considered a “cosmetic” procedure, even though weight loss can be expected to reduce your risk of other serious health issues.

When did this procedure become approved by the FDA?

August 6, 2015

How long does the procedure take?

Both the balloon insertion and removal take approximately 20 minutes.

How is the balloon different than bariatric surgery?

Orbera is a non-invasive option that is removed after six months and does not permanently alter your anatomy. It is typically performed under sedation but not general surgery (no ventilator is required).

How often do I have to come in to the office post-procedure?

You will be seen by your physician approximately 1-2 weeks after your balloon is placed. You will meet with your dietician once each month for the entire 12-month treatment program. These sessions are typically conducted via video conference (telemedicine) from the comfort of your home. Your physician will be available to see you throughout the treatment period, though we do not require mandatory office visits on a set schedule.

What does it feel like to have the balloon in there?

Many people say it feels like they've eaten a large meal immediately after the procedure. Many patients experience nausea and sometimes even vomiting in the first two weeks after placement, as the stomach is getting used to the balloon. After a few weeks, the ability to "tell" where the balloon is goes away. It is not noticeable during exercise, according to our patients.

Can you see the balloon in there?

No, the balloon is not visible from the outside.

How much weight will I lose?

Weight loss is rapid, with most weight loss occurring in the first 3-4 months. It is important for you to understand that the balloon is a tool to aid weight loss and must be used in conjunction with a diet, exercise, and behavior modification program. The amount of weight you lose and maintain will depend on how closely you follow your diet and adopt long-term lifestyle changes. In studies, people lost an average of 13% of their body weight at 6 months, and people with the balloon lost 3 times the weight of those on a diet and exercise program alone. That means that if you weigh 250 pounds, you would be reasonably expected to lose about 32 pounds. The range of weight loss depends on the person and their motivation. In general, we quote studies which predict a weight loss of 30-50 pounds.

What are the risks of the procedure?

Gastric balloons have been used in the management of obesity for over 20 years. Over this time they have evolved in shape, size, and design, resulting in a modern, durable product, which is now well established as a safe weight loss procedure. Over 270,000 ORBERA[®] balloons have been placed worldwide. The risk of a serious side effect is about 1 in 10,000. Potential serious side effects include stomach ulceration, balloon deflation, bowel obstruction, intestinal perforation, and death.

How many balloons have deflated in stomachs?

Balloon deflation is a rare event, typically related to a balloon that has been in the stomach for over 6 months. This event is estimated to occur in 0.3% of patients (3 out of every 1000 patients). You will be monitored for balloon deflation while the balloon dwells and will be required to have it removed at 6 months.

What are the signs that the balloon has deflated?

In the unlikely event that your Orbera balloon should deflate, you may no longer feel full after eating. If the balloon were to leave your stomach and enter the small intestine, you

could develop symptoms of bowel obstruction, including pain, nausea, and vomiting. If you suspect this may be the case, notify your doctor immediately. A simple abdominal x-ray can determine whether this has occurred. If it has, your doctor will arrange to remove the deflated balloon.