

Bariatric Surgery

Weight Loss Surgery in Mexico — Your Friendly Guide to What to Expect
Everything you need to know, written in plain English — no jargon, no scary stuff.

So — What Exactly is Bariatric Surgery?

Bariatric surgery — often called weight loss surgery — is not a quick fix. It's a life-changing medical intervention for people who have been unable to achieve sustained weight loss through diet and exercise alone, and whose weight is genuinely affecting their health and quality of life.

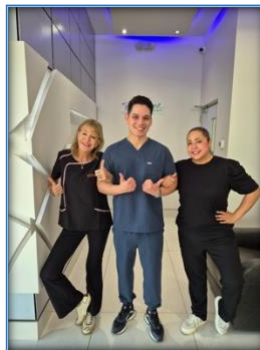
The surgery works by modifying the stomach and sometimes the digestive system to limit how much you can eat, reduce hunger signals, or change how nutrients are absorbed. The result is significant, lasting weight loss — and for many people, a dramatic improvement or complete resolution of conditions like type 2 diabetes, sleep apnea, high blood pressure, and joint pain.

We help New Zealanders access bariatric surgery in Mexico — one of the world's most established destinations for weight loss surgery. Mexican bariatric surgeons perform thousands of procedures every year, with complication rates and outcomes comparable to top international standards, at a fraction of the New Zealand private cost.

The Three Procedures We Offer

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to bariatric surgery. Here's a plain-English overview of the three procedures available through JBTG:

Gastric Sleeve	About 80% of the stomach is permanently removed, leaving a narrow sleeve-shaped tube. This reduces the amount you can eat and significantly lowers the hunger hormone ghrelin. No rerouting of the intestines. Simpler procedure with an excellent track record for sustained weight loss.
Mini Gastric Bypass (OAGB)	The stomach is formed into a small tube and connected directly to the small intestine, bypassing a portion of the digestive tract. One anastomosis (join) rather than two. Strong results for weight loss and resolution of metabolic conditions such as type 2 diabetes. Generally faster to perform than a full bypass.
Gastric Bypass (Roux-en-Y)	The gold standard of bariatric surgery. A small stomach pouch is created and connected to the mid-section of the small intestine, bypassing the rest of the stomach and upper intestine. Two anastomoses. Powerful results for both weight loss and metabolic improvement, particularly for severe obesity and diabetes.



Is Bariatric Surgery Right for You?

You may be a good candidate if you tick most of these boxes:

✓	Your BMI is 32 or above — or 30+ with an obesity-related health condition (such as type 2 diabetes, sleep apnea, or high blood pressure)
✓	You have tried and struggled to maintain meaningful weight loss through diet, exercise, or medical management
✓	You are generally healthy enough to safely undergo surgery and a general anaesthetic
✓	You are a non-smoker, or willing to stop well in advance of surgery
✓	You have realistic expectations — surgery is a powerful tool, but long-term success also depends on lifestyle changes
✓	You are doing this for your health and your own quality of life, not external pressure
✓	You are committed to the dietary and follow-up requirements after surgery
✓	Your BMI is up to 47 — for BMI above 47, pricing is available on application, and we will assess your case individually



Not sure if you qualify? Don't worry — that's exactly what your initial consultation is for. The surgical team will review your health history, your BMI, and any existing conditions, and give you an honest, personalised assessment. There is no pressure and no commitment required at that stage.

How the Surgery Actually Works — Step by Step

Here is exactly what happens, from start to finish, in plain English:

1	You go under anaesthesia All three procedures are performed under general anaesthesia, so you are completely asleep and comfortable throughout. Your anaesthetist will explain everything beforehand.
2	The laparoscopic approach Surgery is performed laparoscopically — through small keyhole incisions using a tiny camera and instruments. This means less scarring, less pain, and faster recovery compared to open surgery.
3	The stomach is modified Depending on your chosen procedure, the surgical team will either remove a large portion of your stomach (sleeve), create a smaller stomach pouch and connect it to the intestine (mini bypass), or create a pouch and a more complex intestinal rerouting (Roux-en-Y bypass).
4	Everything is checked Your surgeon will verify position, check for leaks, and confirm everything is exactly right before closing. Thorough intraoperative checks are a core part of the process.
5	You are closed and cared for Incisions are closed carefully. You will be monitored closely in recovery and typically remain in hospital for 3 nights as part of your all-inclusive package.

Before Your Surgery — What to Expect

Before the big day, Jackie Brown your New Zealand medical tourism consultant along with Pam Bennett our on ground coordinator based in Mexico will walk you through everything you need to do to prepare. You'll receive specific instructions covering:

✓	Pre-operative blood tests and health assessments
✓	A pre-surgery liver-reduction diet — usually a very low calorie diet (VLCD) for 2–4 weeks before surgery to shrink the liver and make the procedure safer
✓	Which medications and supplements to stop taking (and when) — especially blood thinners and certain herbal supplements
✓	Day-of-surgery instructions — what to eat, drink, and wear
✓	Your post-operative dietary stages and what to expect during early recovery
✓	What your follow-up care will look like both in Mexico and back home in New Zealand



Be completely honest with your surgical team. Tell them everything — your full health history, every medication and supplement you take, alcohol and tobacco use, and any past procedures. This information is what keeps you safe. There is no judgement, only care.

Risks — The Honest Bit

Every surgical procedure carries some level of risk, and we want you to feel fully informed rather than surprised. Your surgeon will discuss all of these with you in detail before you proceed.

!	Bleeding or haematoma — may require a return to theatre in rare cases
!	Infection at the incision site or internally
!	Anastomotic leak — a leak at the join between the stomach and intestine; rare but serious if it occurs
!	Nutritional deficiencies — particularly with bypass procedures, lifelong vitamin and mineral supplementation is essential
!	Dumping syndrome — a reaction to eating sugary or fatty foods too quickly, causing nausea, sweating, and discomfort
!	Reflux or heartburn — more common after sleeve gastrectomy in some patients
!	Weight regains — possible without sustained dietary and lifestyle changes
!	Risks associated with anaesthesia — these will be fully explained by your anaesthetist
!	Revision surgery — occasionally required if complications arise or results are insufficient



It is completely natural to feel some nerves before surgery. Whether that's excitement about the outcome or anxiety about the procedure itself, please share how you are feeling with your surgical team. They have heard it all before and are genuinely there to support you.

Recovery — What Happens After Surgery

Here's what recovery typically looks like, week by week:

Timeline	What to Expect
Lead up	1-5 nights pre surgery. Depends whether you choose to join our fully escorted "Gastric Getaway" group experience, with tours of San Diego and includes Disneyland or our more flexible "Sleeve & Go" Lite adventure, or you prefer to travel independently with our "Go It Alone" option, we can tailor your experience to include or reduce additional time to relax, recover, shop, sightsee, or simply enjoy Southern California at your own pace. (please note 5 nights/ 6 days post procedure is required by all airlines). A liquid-only diet is required for 48 hours prior to surgery. Please note that you must also remain nil by mouth from the night before your procedure
Days 1–3 (In Mexico)	You'll recover in hospital for 3 nights. Fluids only to begin with. Some discomfort, bloating, and fatigue are completely normal. Gentle walking is encouraged from day one. Pain is managed with prescribed medication. All medication during your stay is included.

Days 4–7	You will typically fly home within this window once cleared by your surgical team and have your “fit to fly certificate”. Energy is low but improving. Continue sipping fluids regularly. Avoid any lifting or strenuous activity.
Weeks 2–4	Progressing through dietary stages — from fluids to pureed food. Fatigue gradually improves. Most people are able to work from home or return to light desk work within 2–3 weeks. No heavy lifting or vigorous exercise.
Weeks 4–6	Moving toward soft foods and then a normal (smaller) diet. Weight loss is becoming very noticeable. Energy levels improving significantly. Begin adding gentle exercise such as walking.
Months 2–6	Significant and ongoing weight loss. Most people feel dramatically better — more energy, improved health markers, better sleep, reduced joint pain. Regular blood tests and vitamin supplementation are essential.
Months 6–18+	Most excess weight lost. Many obesity-related conditions significantly improved or resolved. This phase is about consolidating your new lifestyle — nutrition, movement, and long-term wellbeing.



Vitamin and mineral supplementation are not optional — it’s a lifelong commitment after bariatric surgery, particularly with bypass procedures. Your surgical team will prescribe what you need, and regular blood tests back home in New Zealand will keep everything on track.

Your Results — What to Look Forward To

The change that follows bariatric surgery can be genuinely life-altering. Most people lose 60–80% of their excess body weight within the first year. But it’s about far more than the number on the scale.

Many patients see a dramatic improvement — or complete resolution — of type 2 diabetes, sleep apnea, high blood pressure, reflux, and joint pain. Clothes that fit. Energy that returns. A body that feels manageable again.

The results are long-lasting when supported by the dietary and lifestyle changes your team will guide you through. This is not a shortcut — it’s a powerful tool that, used well, can genuinely transform your health and your life.

Cost — Mexico vs New Zealand

The cost difference between having bariatric surgery in Mexico through JBTG versus having it done privately in New Zealand is substantial. Here's a general comparison:

Procedure	Mexico (USD) — All Inclusive*	New Zealand (approx. NZD)
Gastric Sleeve	USD \$4,499	~ \$21,500 – \$29,000
Mini Gastric Bypass (OAGB)	USD \$5,888	~ \$25,200 – \$27,500
Gastric Bypass (Roux-en-Y)	USD \$6,100	~ \$25,500 – \$35,000
Consultation	Included	~ \$200 – \$350
Take Home Medication	Included	~ \$30 – \$150
BMI 48-54	Additional USD \$600	Price on application
BMI 55-59	Additional USD \$1000	Price on application

**Mexico package includes: all surgical fees, anaesthetist, hospital costs, a team of eight theatre staff, online access to nutritionist for 12 months, all medications during your stay, and 3 nights in Mexico.*

Airfares, accommodation outside of hospital, transfers, and JBTG Limited's logistics and escort fees are additional — see your personalised invoice for full costings. All surgical costs are paid directly to the hospital.

Additional Surgical Findings: Mexico vs New Zealand

During bariatric surgery, it is not uncommon for surgeons to identify additional conditions such as hernias or internal scar tissue (adhesions). These can often be treated at the same time as your primary procedure.

Mexico (during bariatric surgery)

If additional issues are found during your operation, they can usually be treated immediately:

- Hernia repair: USD \$700
- Removal of internal scar tissue (adhesiolysis): USD \$500

These are fixed, transparent add-on costs, completed within the same surgical session to avoid further procedures and recovery time.

Compared to New Zealand (private system)

In New Zealand, the same procedures are typically billed differently and can be significantly higher:

- Hernia repair (when combined with bariatric surgery): approx. NZD \$2,000 – \$6,000+
- Separate hernia surgery (if required later): approx. NZD \$8,000 – \$15,000+
- Removal of internal scar tissue: often included in surgery, but may add approx. NZD \$1,000 – \$3,000+ if complex or time-consuming

Costs vary depending on hospital time, surgical complexity, and individual surgeon fees.

Key difference

Mexico offers fixed, predictable pricing for additional findings during surgery, while New Zealand costs are variable and generally higher, depending on clinical complexity and theatre time.



A note about JBTG Limited's role. We organise everything around your surgery — your flights, hotel, all your transfers, and we escort you every step of the way. We are not medical professionals. Your surgical team, your treatment decisions, and your medical contract are between you and the hospital directly. Our job is to make sure you get there, you're supported throughout, and you come home safely.

Ready to Find Out More?

Here's how to get started — it's simpler than you might think:

1	Get in touch Call or email us for a no-obligation chat. Tell us a little about what you're hoping to achieve, and we'll take it from there.
2	We connect you with our team in Mexico Our trusted on-the-ground medical coordinators will assess your needs and connect you with the right surgical team for your specific situation.
3	You receive a personalised quote The surgical team will provide a detailed quote based on your individual case, your chosen procedure, and your BMI. No surprises, no hidden costs.
4	We arrange everything Once you're happy to go ahead, we take care of flights, hotel, transfers, and all logistics. You just need to show up.
5	We travel with you You're not going alone. We escort you throughout the entire trip — to every appointment, every step of the way.

Insurance — What You Need to Know

Travel insurance is highly recommended for anyone travelling to Mexico for surgery. Standard New Zealand travel insurance policies will not cover elective procedures — so it's important to arrange specialist medical travel cover before you go. We work with Global Protective Solutions, who offer insurance specifically designed for medical tourists. Their policy covers the procedure itself and any complications for up to six months after your procedure date, including care back home in New Zealand. Please note that this is not a standard travel insurance policy — it does not cover the other elements of your trip such as flights, luggage, or cancellations.

You can enroll directly through our dedicated link at www.globalprotectivesolutions.com/enroll/bumstumsgums. No visa is required for New Zealand passport holders visiting Mexico for stays under 180 days, but we will ensure you have all the information you need well in advance of travel.