



Summary #1: Patients in the PCORnet Bariatric Study

What does this summary describe?

This summary describes the patients who were included in the PCORnet Bariatric Study (PBS). Researchers refer to the people selected to be in a study as the cohort or group. Within each group, there might be subgroups of people whose data is analyzed separately. For example, a study might have an adult cohort and an adolescent cohort, or a male cohort and a female cohort.

How many patients are in the PBS cohort?

The PBS cohort includes 65,870 patients from 42 health systems around the country. Compared to other studies of bariatric surgery in the United States, the PBS cohort of patients is one of the largest ever studied. Within the overall PBS cohort, 65,093 patients were adults who were age 20 to 79 at the time of their surgery (the adult cohort). The other 777 patients were adolescents who were age 12 to 19 at the time of their surgery (the adolescent cohort).

How did we select patients in the PBS cohort?

In most health systems, information about the care and services provided to each patient is entered into an electronic medical record. This information was used to identify the PBS cohort. Before the data could be used, though, any element that could possibly identify a person was removed. This includes names, addresses, or birth dates. Only the health system where the patient received care has access to these identifiers – they were not shared with anyone outside of that location. In PBS we used these “de-identified” medical record data from 42 participating health systems to find people who met certain criteria:

- First, we looked for people who had one of the three surgeries we are studying:
 - Adjustable gastric band (AGB) – commonly known as lap band or band
 - Roux-en-Y gastric bypass (RYGB) – commonly known as bypass
 - Sleeve gastrectomy (SG) - commonly known as sleeve
- Second, we made sure that:
 - Their surgery happened between January 1, 2005 and September 30, 2015.
 - It was their first weight loss surgery.
 - They were 12-79 years old when they had surgery.
- Third, we only wanted to consider patients who had surgery for weight loss. To do this, we looked at the year before the surgery took place and excluded patients who:
 - Did not have a body mass index (BMI) of at least 35 kg/m²



- Had GI cancer (cancer of the stomach or other digestive organs)
- Visited the emergency room the same day of their surgery

Characteristics of the 65,093 patients in the adult cohort:

Age & gender		Race & ethnicity		Type of surgery*	
Age range	20 – 79	White	72%	Bypass	50%
Average age	45	Black	21%	Sleeve	46%
Gender	79% female	Hispanic	24%	Band	5%

*Column totals 101% due to rounding

Most common health conditions adult patients had at time of surgery	
Hypertension	59% of cohort
Sleep apnea	49% of cohort
Dyslipidemia (unhealthy level of fat in blood)	47% of cohort

Characteristics of the 777 patients in the adolescent cohort:

Age & gender		Race & ethnicity		Type of surgery	
Age range	12 – 19	White	67%	Bypass	31%
Average age	17	Black	23%	Sleeve	60%
Gender	78% female	Hispanic	18%	Band	9%



Most common health conditions adolescent patients had at time of surgery	
Sleep apnea	37% of cohort
Dyslipidemia (unhealthy level of fat in blood)	34% of cohort
Hypertension	31% of cohort

Questions to consider about the PBS cohort:

- 1) Are you surprised by the characteristics of adults in the cohort? Did you expect the characteristics of people to be different than what we found?
- 2) Are you surprised by the characteristics of adolescents who have had weight loss surgery?
- 3) When talking with your doctor about whether or not to have weight loss surgery, would you have wanted to know how many people “like you” had bariatric surgery around the country? For example, would it have been helpful to know that 21% of people in the PBS cohort were Black?