



## AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION ISSUES FIRST SCIENTIFIC STATEMENT ON BARIATRIC SURGERY

The American Heart Association (AHA) issued its first statement focused solely on bariatric surgery and cardiac risk factors. The statement concludes that bariatric surgery can result in long-term weight loss and significant reductions in cardiac and other risk factors for some severely obese adults. The statement was published in the March 14, 2011 edition of *Circulation*.

*Here are the highlights:*

- Bariatric surgery is a viable option for patients who are severely obese and are safe surgical candidates who have failed medical therapy for losing weight
- When indicated, bariatric surgery often leads to long-term weight loss and significantly improved health
- While there are risks, bariatric surgery is considered a relatively safe procedure, especially in centers that perform many of the procedures

The scientific statement's lead author, Paul Poirier, MD, PhD, director of the prevention/rehabilitation program at Quebec Heart and Lung Institute at Laval University Hospital in Canada, said in an AHA news release: "Substantial long-term successes from lifestyle modifications and drug therapy have been disappointing, making it important to look at surgical options."

The AHA says its statement-writing committee found that, when indicated, bariatric surgery leads to significant weight loss and improvements in the health consequences of being overweight, such as diabetes, high cholesterol, liver disease, high blood pressure, obstructive sleep apnea and cardiovascular dysfunction. It also stated that recent studies have suggested that bariatric surgery prolongs life in the severely obese.

The AHA's statement adds to the growing recognition by individuals and groups including the American Diabetes Association (ADA), that bariatric and metabolic surgery is an important, effective and safe treatment option to treat the disease of obesity and related diseases.