ASMBS Weekend
CHICAGO,IL | JUNE 20-22, 2019

Highlighted Abstract

Comparing Medication Costs Before and After Bariatric Surgery

Abstract Body:

Introduction:
Bariatric surgery for morbid obesity can help correct several comorbid conditions, including diabetes and hypertension. In most patients, this results in a reduction or discontinuation of corresponding prescription medications. As so, patients who undergo bariatric surgery should see a significant reduction in medication spending after the operation. In this study, we seek to compare the effect of bariatric surgery on the amount spent on diabetes and hypertension medications.

Methods:
This study was a purely retrospective chart review. Patient data was obtained from a database retrieved by the Department of Bariatric Surgery at Rush University. The number of prescription medications for diabetes and hypertension being used prior to and after surgery was recorded. Prices were attributed to each medication based on the standardized pricing guide provided by Drugs.com. Amount spent on medications before and after surgery was calculated accordingly.

Results:
Data was collected from 210 patients (F=162, M=48). Patients spent a mean of $225 on diabetes medications and $71 on hypertensive medications pre-operatively. Post-operatively, diabetes medication costs were reduced to $80 ($p < .001$), and $70 ($p < .001$) at 3 and 6 months, and hypertensive medication costs were reduced to $54 ($p < .05$), and $47 ($p < .05$) at 3 and 6 months.

Conclusions:
Bariatric surgery can reduce prescription medication requirements resulting in cost savings that are not-dependent on weight loss alone. It is important for insurers, physicians, and patients to consider the potential financial impact of bariatric surgery in addition to its health benefits when deciding whether to pursue the operation.

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