

# All About Hair Loss



Hair loss, or *telogen effluvium*, is seen frequently 3–6 months after surgery. Patients note diffuse shedding of normal hair. Lasting as long as 6–12 months, it can be terribly distressing!

The stress of weight loss disrupts the normal growth cycle of individual hairs, resulting in large numbers of growing hair simultaneously entering the dying (telogen) phase. Although there is no known treatment, it usually reverses without intervention...

Hair loss following gastric bypass surgery and subsequent weight loss is common. We do not know definitively why some patients lose their hair after surgery and some don't. Healthy hair depends on protein, vitamins, minerals and essential fatty acids.

However, hair loss is most often related to the stress of the surgery or shifts in hormones. It's normal to lose about 100 to 125 hairs daily but some patients experience more shedding than this. Hair loss is usually at its worst 3-6 months following surgery.

Fortunately, the hair follicle is not damaged and the hair will grow back.

Make sure you are:

- Consuming 60-70 grams of protein each day
- Take a well balanced multivitamin with iron and zinc in it (take 2 a day for the first 6 months, then 1 a day forever)
- Take your vitamin B12 (500 mcg) and calcium citrate (1500-2000 mg) supplements as recommended



Do not overdose with mega doses of any vitamin, as this can be harmful to your health. Just because a little is good, does not mean that a lot is better. Make sure to have labwork done every 6 months until 2 years out from surgery, then annually.

If hair loss continues more than one year after surgery or starts more than 6-9 months after surgery, let your bariatric surgery team know, we will investigate the cause. Hair loss this late after surgery could be related to other vitamin or mineral deficiencies.