
Losing weight... and maybe your spouse

With weight-loss drugs dominating the airwaves, we've been contemplating some of the potential unexpected side effects. Like for one, is weight loss good or bad for marriage? Studies on bariatric surgery offer surprising clues.

Researchers in the US followed 827 married and 614 single people who got bariatric surgery for five years and found that those who weren't married were more than [twice as likely](#) to tie the knot after surgery. But married people were more than twice as likely to get divorced, according to analysis from University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health researchers.

This wasn't the first study of its kind. Researchers in Denmark and Sweden saw [similar trends](#) among married and unmarried people who got weight-loss surgery in Scandinavia.

In the US analysis, researchers found that the number of pounds shed wasn't associated with whether an unmarried person was likely to get married, but their health improvement was. Among married people though, those who lost more weight — and those whose sexual desire increased — were, in fact, more likely to part ways with their spouse.

“It can be really hard when one spouse changes what they eat and how active they are, and desires more sexual activity, while the other doesn't,” [Wendy King](#), professor of epidemiology at Pitt Public Health, says. “It may be important for couples to consider this and have strategies to maintain their connection after surgery.”

For those considering weight-loss surgery and worried for their marriages, rest assured the increase in divorces was only seen among a minority of people in the study. Some 81% of people still remained married five years after surgery. In the general public, the divorce rate is 4% while 8% of

participants in the study got divorced. Another 5% ended up separated five years after surgery.

What does this mean for weight-loss drugs like Wegovy and Zepbound? We may never know. The drug companies aren't prone to studying things like this, so there isn't likely to be a "side effects may include divorce" warning in their TV ads anytime soon. — [*Madison Muller and Cynthia Koons*](#)