

Body Image Group

Bariatric Surgery Program

What is the Body Image Group?

The objective of the Body Image Group is to help people in the Bariatric Surgery Program with reducing the distress and dissatisfaction they may feel about their body, including weight. This is achieved by learning new ways of thinking, feeling and behaving in response to their weight, shape and appearance.

The group facilitators teach skills from Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) to help reduce body image concerns.

Who is this group for?

This group is designed for pre-op and post-op patients in the Bariatric Surgery Program who are struggling with their body image and are interested in actively working on improving it, without changing their weight.

Will this group help me lose weight?

No. This group is designed to help people change the way they *think* about their body, rather than changing their body. The focus of the group is on improving body image by moving towards body acceptance and also reflecting on one's life values.

What does the group involve?

The group consists of 4 sessions via Microsoft (MS) Teams. Each session is 2 hours long and is facilitated by 2 of the Registered Social Workers on the Bariatric Surgery Program team. The sessions include opportunities to learn about body image and reflect on ways to feel better about your body.

Session 1: What does it mean to have body image concerns? What is weight bias and stigma?

Session 2: Learning skills to reduce behaviours that keep body image concerns alive

Session 3: Values, overvaluing appearance and an introduction to values-based living

Session 4: Goal setting and maintaining positive changes

Do I have to attend all 4 sessions?

In order to participate in the group, you must be able to attend all dates, as there is continuity from one week to the next. If you are unable to attend the dates offered, we can place you on the waitlist for the next group. We also understand that things come up and you might have to miss a session after starting. To fully benefit from the group, we would recommend that you discontinue and wait for the next group.

Is there homework?

Yes. Research shows that the more consistently you practice skills, the more quickly you will learn them and benefit from them. We will remind you about homework and help you troubleshoot any difficulty completing homework.

How can I be added to the waitlist?

For more information or to be added to the waitlist, please contact a member of the Social Work team: Ilona Wulffhart ilona.wulffhart@uhn.ca, Julia Skiadaresis julia.skiadaresis@uhn.ca or Sasha-Ann Winchester sasha-ann.winchester@uhn.ca

