Study Puts Bariatric Surgery for Type 2 Diabetes to the Test

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(PhysOrg.com) -- A multi-disciplinary team of Penn researchers, including diabetes, weight loss and bariatric surgery experts, are conducting a study funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to determine if bariatric surgery, either gastric bypass or adjustable gastric banding surgery, is more effective than lifestyle modification to reduce weight and ultimately treat Type 2 diabetes.

This study will also test whether people with a lower body mass index (BMI) - a BMI of 30 or greater, compared to the current NIH recommended 35 or greater BMI - may benefit from surgery to treat type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure or other significant health problems. With evidence suggesting that weight loss surgery often leads to significant improvement in type 2 diabetes, many experts believe that this BMI recommendation should be lowered for people who are both overweight and have type 2 diabetes.

Additional data from randomized controlled trials, such as this study, are needed to help better understand who the most appropriate candidates for weight loss surgery are.

The Center for Weight and Eating Disorders and Bariatric and Metabolic Surgery Program at the University of Pennsylvania recently received a Challenge Grant from the NIH as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act - the nationwide economic stimulus package. This clinical trial will investigate the safety and effectiveness of weight loss surgery for overweight persons with type 2 diabetes.

Eligible patients will be randomly assigned to one of 2 types of weight loss surgery, Roux-en-Y gastric bypass or laparoscopic adjustable gastric banding, or to intensive lifestyle modification. Participants will be closely followed for one year to compare the effects of these treatments on their diabetes status.

Provided by University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine