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Bariatric Surgery in Saudi Arabia: The Past, Present and Future

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More than two thirds of the adult population in Saudi Arabia are overweight and one third are obese. It is estimated that 4% of the adult population in Saudi Arabia are eligible for bariatric surgery based on weight criteria only and 9% are eligible if reversible metabolic disorders are included. Open bariatric surgery in Saudi Arabia started in the eighties with open Vertical banded gastroplasty. In 1993, laparoscopic gastric banding was introduced in Europe, and soon after was performed by Dr. Bukhari and Dr. Madani in Saudi Arabia. The first international laparoscopic gastric bypass surgery was performed in 1994 by Dr. Wittgrove in San Diego but was delayed in Saudi till 2000. Successful gastric bypass was performed in 2001. Perceptor and Proctorship Visiting bariatric surgeons influenced the type of surgery performed in different centers. Laparoscopic bilio-pancreatic diversion (Scopinaro Procedure) began earlier than gastric bypass based and resulted in significant weight loss and resolution of comorbid conditions but with a high price to pay due to severe nutritional deficiencies. Roux- Y gastric bypass became popular in the new millennium with the return of western qualified young surgeons and the results were encouraging that made it the number one procedure for over a decade replacing Scopinaro and band surgery. Since 2007, Sleeve gastrectomy became the most popular gained momentum and in 2012 became the number one procedure in Saudi. Worry about long term small bowel complications from R Y gastric Bypass and difficulty in addressing weight regain after the procedure and the simplicity with which one anastomosis gastric bypass can be performed has made the latter the more popular procedure second Sleeve thus far. Many lesser invasive but ineffective trial procedures including endoscopic procedures continue to be performed in a newly regulated health care system but they fade quickly.

Biography:

Dr. Alsanea graduated with honors from Kuwait University. He completed his did and early surgical training at King Faisal Specialist Hospital in Riyadh then was awarded a scholarship to complete his surgical training at Tufts University, Boston. He obtained a fellowship in Minimally Invasive Surgery under the Dr. Schwaitzberg past president of SAGES and Dr Shikora past president of IFSO then completed a completed a fellowship in Endocrine Surgery under Dr. Clark past president of AAES and ATA at UCSF California. Dr. Alsanea practice emphasizes minimally Invasive, bariatric and Endocrine Surgery in the first dedicated multidisciplinary diabetes therapy center