

My name is Kelly. In early July 2011, I had a Roux-En-Y Gastric Bypass, performed by Mr. Sanjay Agrawal.



My reason for needing the surgery was simple – I was obese. In medical terms I probably fell into the category of “morbidly obese”. At the time of my initial consultation with Mr Agrawal I weighed 21 stone 4lb (135.9 kilos). I am 5ft 11in tall.

I suffer with Hypothyroidism (which is an under-active thyroid), and I also suffer very badly with headaches. Because of an unhappy reaction in my body causing my headaches to become so severe as to be unable to work, I have never been able to take a sufficiently high dose of thyroxine to reach the happy place of being able to lose weight in the traditional way – diet and exercise. A small weight-loss was possible but I could never achieve a meaningful drop in weight. I had been this way most of my life. At 16, I had lost weight on a diet but never been able to maintain it. During the year prior to my consultation I had lost one stone – but I looked bigger than ever. My 40<sup>th</sup> birthday was around the corner and I knew, as I got older, all I could expect was more ‘middle aged’ weight gain - and the worry of obesity-related illness – heart problems, diabetes etc.

So, after much thought and research (more than six months of deliberating) I decided I should at least have a consultation with a bariatric surgeon and explore my options. My research led me to Mr Agrawal, and by extension the team at Spire Roding's Bariatric Clinic. I believe Mr. Agrawal's website speaks clearly to my reasons for consulting with him.

At our initial meeting, Mr Agrawal was calm, quietly confident and more than happy to speak with me at length about the various surgeries available and about which he thought best for me. I had initially come to talk about Gastric Banding

but Mr Agrawal thought that the Bypass was a better choice for me. I was provided with some literature to read and much food for thought.

So, I took the plunge and booked. And the short version is that it was, and remains, the best decision I have ever taken!

The slightly longer version is that I had NO surgical complications. My wounds healed easily and exactly as I was told to expect. I had no infection or problems of that nature from the surgery. The immediate post surgery regime is not complicated but does require forethought and planning. You must be prepared to retrain your body to 'eat' food after the surgery – similarly to the way you train a baby to eat. The time frames vary in each personal case, but on average you can expect to be “on liquids only” for about three weeks: soups without bits, drinks made with milk, protein shakes – that kind of thing. Then you transition to pureed foods and that could be another three weeks. Then gradually you move to foods you can eat mash/easily on the plate, and finally, slowly you begin to eat normally. Mr Agrawal, and the hospital, provided detailed notes on balancing nutrition during this phase and provide suggestions of liquids or food that will work.

While your body makes all these adjustments, you will be tired. Very tired. I was. Every day at work was a real struggle. But about eight or nine weeks in, the tiredness evaporated and I felt 'just like myself' again...and it was literally overnight. One day I was so tired I went to bed at 7pm, the next morning I got up and went to work as if nothing had happened...and that was it. Back to normal.

Now I eat smaller meals than I did before, I take a calcium supplement and a standard multi-vitamin each day. I avoid too much processed and confectionary sugars but fruits and their natural sugar don't cause me too many problems.

The hospital where Mr Agrawal performed the surgery operates a Bariatric Support Group, one evening each month. The information I received from both Mr. Agrawal and the hospital has meant that nothing has happened to me during the last eighteen months that was not predicted or expected. Even the smallest experience in my journey had happened to someone else so when it happened to me I was ready for it...like the tiredness, for example. I was warned to expect it, told how long it might last, and that when it was over it would be over...just like that, and so it was. When I had difficulty transitioning from puree to proper food my best friend, who had the surgery a year before I did, told me to buy some kids' cutlery so that I would take smaller mouthfuls, and to remember to eat slowly. She was right. I was warned that nearly everyone who has this surgery ends up with one food they cannot tolerate post surgery – and it's different for everyone so you just have to stumble across it. I can't eat fresh currants – either black or red. Weird eh? I just find them too difficult to digest.

As you can see, I feel I have been completely supported throughout the entire process...by Mr. Agrawal and the team at the hospital, and the support group about which I was initially sceptical, proved to be invaluable. I was given mobile phone numbers and email addresses to use in case of emergency problems (I never used them) and I know that if I need Mr. Agrawal I can call and make an

appointment to see him immediately. I am not sure I would have felt so comfortable with my decision, or so confident that I could manage the recovery and follow-ups without Mr Agrawal's calm good sense, and gentle encouragement.

And the really good news...I now weigh 13 stone and 8lbs (86 kilos). I've lost over ten inches from my waist, and from my hips! I am no longer at risk of diabetes. No risk of heart problems either, or at least no more than everyone else.

And for all the ladies out there...I can now shop in nearly any store on the High Street...I'm saving a fortune!

If you're thinking about it and want to contact me, I'm happy to answer any questions... but basically the answer to every question is "go for it, it's truly a life changing decision."

I have no regrets!

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