

The adjustable gastric band.

The adjustable gastric band is made of soft silicone and is equipped with a firmly attached inflatable balloon. This balloon is connected by a tube to an access port.

The band is positioned around the upper part of the stomach by keyhole (or laparoscopic) surgery so as to create a small pouch. This small pouch lies above the band and has a capacity of 15-20mL. The remaining stomach lies below the band. The band helps patients reduce weight by 2 mechanisms:

By restricting the amount of food that the stomach can hold at any time by inducing an early feeling of satiety and

By slowing down the emptying from the pouch, thereby decreasing food intake.

The size of the pouch outlet is adjusted by adjusting the volume of fluid in the balloon through the access port. The access port is situated under the skin usually in the upper abdomen and is easily accessible by the treating doctor with a special needle.

Since the insertion of the adjustable gastric band does not involve any stapling, resection or shortening of any part of the stomach or intestines, the function of the digestive system remains intact. All ingested food will still be absorbed by the body the same way that it was before the operation. Weight loss is achieved by helping induce early feeling of satiety after eating considerably smaller amounts of food than before the surgery. It is most important to avoid foods of high caloric content, such as ice cream, custards and chocolates.