Advanced Age and Success of Bariatric Surgery

Antonio E. Pontiroli¹ · Chiara Osio² · Valerio Ceriani² · Franco Folli¹

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Sir,

We read with interest the recent paper by Kaplan et al. [1] reporting the response to bariatric surgery (gastric bypass and sleeve gastrectomy) according to age of patients. We were glad to see that, in spite of a lower weight loss, aged patients had a similar or even a better resolution of comorbidities than younger patients. In a retrospective study on 837 patients receiving gastric banding, with a follow-up of 2 years, we analyzed two parameters, i.e., quartiles of age of patients and of duration of obesity, and we found similar results [2]. Even though the age of patients in our study was somehow less advanced [2], both studies reported higher frequency of pre-surgery comorbidities in aged patients than in younger patients, with a greater resolution of comorbidities in the former than in the latter age group [1, 2]. There is one additional aspect of interest; bariatric surgery prevents long-term mortality in comparison with medical treatment [3], and at least two studies have shown that the greater survival is significant for patients with advanced age, not for young patients, probably because of the low overall mortality of young obese patients [4, 5]. Together, these studies indicate that age, and duration of obesity [2], should not be regarded as a limitation to bariatric surgery in obese patients with comorbidities and suggest that resolution of comorbidities, rather than weight loss, should be considered the real index of success of bariatric surgery.

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Compliance with Ethical Standards

Ethical Approval This article does not contain any studies with human participants or animals performed by any of the authors.

Informed Consent Does not apply.

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✉ Antonio E. Pontiroli
antonio.pontiroli@unimi.it

¹ Dipartimento di Scienze della Salute, Università degli Studi di Milano, Milan, Italy

² Istituto di Ricerca e Cura Multimedica, Milan, Italy