

How to Face Intimate Issues

Sure, a lot has changed in the kitchen and dining room. But what about the bedroom? Some couples struggle in their physical and emotional relationships as one partner drops the pounds. Here are some common issues one or both of you may be facing—and how to open the lines of communication to grow closer.

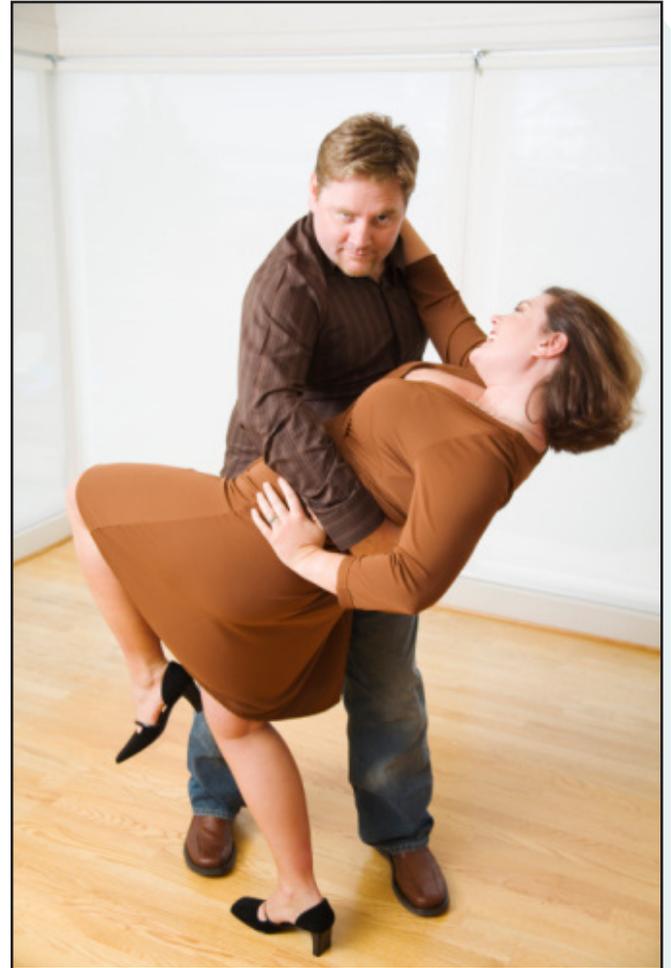
LAP-BAND[®] System surgery can change your life in lots of ways—and your relationship is no exception. In many cases, people who have lost a lot of weight find that their relationship improves. “My marriage is in better shape today than it was over the past 10 years,” says Laura King, 33, of Haslett, Michigan, who since having LAP-BAND[®] System surgery in January 2008 has dropped from 276 pounds to 168 pounds (just 15 pounds from her goal). “I’m happier. I bring more to the relationship because I’m no longer so negative,” she says. “And obviously he’s much more attracted to me now.” Also, if your partner has always been slimmer, you may find that the two of you can now do things together that your sweetheart used to do alone, such as traveling, hiking, or scuba diving.

In her book *Laparoscopic Adjustable Gastric Banding*, Jessie H. Ahroni, PhD, ARNP, who had LAP-BAND[®] System surgery more than 10 years ago and is bariatric program manager at Northwest Weight Loss Surgery in Everett, Washington, says that other couples find the changes associated with losing weight can stress their relationship. Does your spouse still want to sit on the couch and snack, while you’d rather go for a walk? Maybe your weight loss has inspired you to change careers or go back to college...and now you’re the main breadwinner. Maybe your partner thinks you look great, but your body image hasn’t changed yet. Or maybe you still feel more attractive in your clothes than out of them.

If any of these scenarios sound familiar, take heart: You and your partner can work through issues like these. Here are some ways to grow closer.

Change up the conversation.

Are you constantly talking about what you weigh, what you ate, what you did at the gym, and so on? If your spouse is also on a weight-loss journey, this may be okay. If not, these topics may get “old.” Make it a point to think of other news you can share with your partner—and be sure to ask about his or her day, too. If necessary, save your weight-loss talk for your support-group friends.



Listen with an open mind.

Try to see things from your partner's point of view. If he or she seems jealous, think about whether you're flirting more—or whether you're even at risk for having an affair. Were you once shy and you're now more outspoken? That kind of change can take some getting used to. Bottom line: Don't just dismiss the concerns of well-meaning friends and family members. Try to see if there's any truth to them, and show a little empathy for their feelings.

Schedule some fun.

With all the changes you're making, it can be easy to forget to plan for date nights or special getaways. Make a point to do things that make your partner feel special, from sending loving e-mails to buying tickets to a show your sweetheart would love to attend.

Talk to a doctor.

If you've lost weight but your sex drive is still not kicking in, you might benefit from a talk to your doctor. Your doctor may not ask you about intimate issues, so it's important for you to bring them up. Sexuality is an important part of a healthy life and a happy marriage.

Consider couples therapy.

If your partner seems threatened or upset by your weight loss, or if you feel your efforts are being sabotaged, it may be time to talk to a therapist or counselor. Also make an appointment if you're tempted to leave your relationship or have an affair, if you're struggling with a negative body image, or if you simply feel your relationship is suffering and you don't know what to do about it. Therapy can help you explore the stressors and benefits associated with your weight loss.

Important LAP-BAND® Safety Information

Indications: The LAP-BAND® System is indicated for weight reduction for patients with obesity, with a Body Mass Index (BMI) of at least 40 kg/m² or a BMI of at least 30 kg/m² with one or more obesity related comorbid conditions.

It is indicated for use in adult patients who have failed more conservative weight reduction alternatives, such as supervised diet, exercise and behavior modification programs. Patients who elect to have this surgery must make the commitment to accept significant changes in their eating habits for the rest of their lives.

Contraindications: The LAP-BAND® System is not recommended for non-adult patients, patients with conditions that may make them poor surgical candidates or increase the risk of poor results (e.g., inflammatory or cardiopulmonary diseases, GI conditions, symptoms or family history of autoimmune disease, cirrhosis) who are unwilling or unable to comply with the required dietary restrictions, who have alcohol or drug addictions or who currently are or may be pregnant.

Warnings: The LAP-BAND® System is a long-term implant. Explant and replacement surgery may be required.



Patients who become pregnant or severely ill, or who require more extensive nutrition, may require deflation of their bands. Anti-inflammatory agents, such as aspirin, should be used with caution and may contribute to an increased risk of band erosion.

Adverse Events: Placement of the LAP-BAND® System is major surgery and, as with any surgery, death can occur. Possible complications include the risks associated with the medications and methods used during surgery, the risks associated with any surgical procedure and the patient's ability to tolerate a foreign object implanted in the body.

Band slippage, erosion and deflation, reflux, obstruction of the stomach, dilation of the esophagus, infection or nausea and vomiting may occur. Reoperation may be required.

Rapid weight loss may result in complications that may require additional surgery. Deflation of the band may alleviate excessively rapid weight loss or esophageal dilation.

Important: For full safety information, please visit www.Lapband.com, talk with your doctor or call Allergan Product Support at 1-800-624-4261.

CAUTION: Rx only.