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## Forget weight loss surgery. You can get the same results dieting & exercising



Exercising for four hours a day and following a strict diet can yield the same results as weight loss surgery, a leading doctor has claimed.

**Dr Robert Huizenga**, of UCLA, says his extreme diet and exercise plan should replace bariatric surgery as a treatment for obesity.

He says bariatric surgery is expensive and carries risks of death, muscle loss, bone thinning and mental health issues. His 'Biggest Loser' weight loss plan, which was made famous by the hit TV show of the same name, helps people lose the same amount of weight and is cheaper than surgery, he claims.

It also leads to better results in terms of retaining calorie-burning muscle mass and has better diabetes and mental health outcomes, he says. 'The Biggest Loser' programme involved participants being housed on a ranch near Los Angeles, California, and their weight loss efforts being filmed and aired as part of a TV show.

On the ranch, they carried out an hour and a half of vigorous circuit training and aerobic training six days a week and were encouraged to exercise for an additional three hours a day. They followed a calorie-restricted diet consisting of low-fat sources of protein and dairy, fresh fruits and vegetables and were advised to avoid fats, sugars and processed grains. As part of a study published in the journal Obesity, 13 people taking part in the 'Biggest Loser' programme were matched with people of similar heights and weights who were undergoing bariatric surgery.

At the end of seven months, the Biggest Loser group had lost an average of 48.8kg, compared to the bariatric group, who lost 35.6kg.

After 12 months, the bariatric group had lost 40.2kg, which was not statistically different to the weight loss achieved by people following the 'Biggest Loser' programme, which only lasted 7 months. Dr Huizenga, Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine at UCLA, told MailOnline, "Bariatric surgery results in massive loss, but it has disadvantages. For every 1,000 people who have the operation there are deaths."

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