surgery to the patient and poses questions to ask the surgeon about the operation and further treatments. There are also excellent links from this site to associated websites, support groups and details of patient-centred literature. Overall, this is an excellent site that would be a good starting point for patients with cancer and their families.****

Cancerbackup

<http://www.cancerbackup.org.uk/Cancertype/Gulletoesophagus>

Another good website that is very similar in detail to that of Cancer Research UK. It is vast but easily negotiable, with the section on the oesophagus being extensive. It surpasses the information provided by the above site on medical detail, hospital stay and what to expect as the tumour is treated. There is also a useful support organisation search tool that can find all relevant support groups in the local area. The only reason the site may be disliked by patients is that the amount of information may be overwhelming for initial research into oesophageal cancer.****

The Oesophageal Patients Association

<http://www.opa.org.uk>

Survivors of oesophageal cancer formed the Oesophageal Patients Association (OPA) in the UK in 1985. Its objectives are to support oesophageal cancer patients and their families. This internet offering is an extension of the services that already existed at the OPA, with the majority of this small website aimed at letting the public know there is someone to turn to when the diagnosis is made and treatments lead to side effects. Details regarding cancer of the oesophagus are limited, although there is useful information on post oesophagectomy symptoms, stenting and diets, along with an online newsletter including dates of branch meetings. Overall this lacks the detail a patient might like but would be the first website to turn to if support was needed.***

Ochre (Oesophageal Cancer Has Reached Everywhere)

<http://ochrecharity.co.uk>

Ochre is a charity-based website aimed at providing information to patients and promoting awareness of oesophageal cancer to the public. This is a clear, easy-to-use site that covers different aspects in varying amount of detail, with surgery unfortunately limited to five short sentences. Similar to the OPA site, it does offer point of access to meetings and allows patients to register for regular E-mail updates. However, the website fails to provide even basic knowledge about the condition that most patients would like to know.**

Surgery for obesity

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<http://www.obesitysurgery.org.uk/>

St James & Seacroft University Hospitals NHS Trust promote its Centre for Obesity Surgery in Leeds. However, it is aimed at providing clear explanations to patients about obesity as a disease, gastric bypass surgery, the team involved and the expected results. The information is easy to understand with no medical jargon, and is presented in a user-friendly manner; users can easily navigate within the site using tabs on the left side of the screen. Details of the support group 'Life-back Club' formed by post gastric bypass patients is included, and it also contains a section for healthcare professionals with some data on patients' perceived improvements. Overall, this is a well-presented site containing useful information for patients considering obesity surgery.****

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/insideout/northwest/series4/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/insideout/northwest/series4/index_obesity_surgery_weight_loss_lynn_greenburg.shtml)

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This BBC website provides a summary of its documentary of a Manchester woman's journey before and after a gastric bypass procedure. It gives viewers a glimpse of the battle against obesity from a first person prospective. Quotes such as 'I had no control over myself...I was my own worst enemy' and 'I spend a lot of time with them (my grandchildren)...I can't get down on the floor' revealed some psychological as well as physical effects of obesity. This site also contains video clips of the patient before and at 8 months' post-procedure, demonstrating the life-changing effect of her successful weight loss. This success story can help to motivate prospective patients and, at the same time, allow healthcare professions working in this area to look at this 'routine procedure' in a different light.***

<http://www.hurwitzcenter.com/html/about.html>

Surgery is often required after bariatric surgery resulting in massive weight loss to remove excess and redundant 'hanging' skin folds. There are many sites available advertising the above surgery, but this site by The Hurwitz Center for Plastic Surgery provides viewers with the most interactive experience. There are no shortages of before and after photographs to illustrate excellent postoperative results. In addition, many video clips of news reports and television documentaries publicising the 'total body lift' are available for viewing. This is not an overly informative site, but a brief visit can certainly be entertaining.***

<http://www.privatehealth.co.uk/hospitaltreatment/find-a-treatment/obesity-treatment/obesity-surgery>

The official website of Private Healthcare UK run by Intuition Communication Ltd provides a comprehensive platform for obtaining information on obesity surgery. This ranges from finding a consultant specialising in the area, guides to obesity surgery, weight-management programmes, to obtaining a quote for the estimated cost of treatment. Navigation through various pages is simple, and the information presented was precise and easy to understand. An online questionnaire under the section 'Are you suitable for weight loss surgery?' provides a simple screening test against the current NICE guidelines. 'The patient journey' along with detailed aftercare and support plan gives a clear overview of the treatment process from initial consultation through to the postoperative support programme. There is also a link to the forthcoming OR-Live Surgical Webcast featuring laparoscopic weight-loss surgery from The Genesis Center for Bariatric Surgery (Davenport, Iowa, USA). This provides excellent visual supplementation to the information described. Overall, a visit to this website and its useful links is highly recommended for patients and healthcare professionals.*****

<http://clos.net/>

'Imagine a 30-minute gastric bypass' and 'The best Christmas gift ever' are examples of the opening statements on this website. It is run by 'The Centers for Excellence in Laparoscopic Obesity Surgery' responsible for many Mini Gastric Bypass procedures performed across many States in America. The site itself is overcrowded with numerous links that makes browsing extremely difficult. It markets the Mini Gastric Bypass as a simple risk-free, reversible procedure with guaranteed weight loss. Information presented is negatively biased toward other well-respected surgical techniques such as the Roux-en-Y gastric bypass and laparoscopic banding. This site also attempts to capture viewers' attention by the displays of dramatic before and after images of patients who had undergone the procedure.

Overall, this site is uninformative, contains biased information and at the same time being unfriendly to users.*

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/bariatric-surgery/index.html>

This official website of the Mayo Clinic gives a good explanation of the types of bariatric surgery on offer as well as the expected pre- and postoperative course. The simple diagrams illustrate the essence of the two types of Roux procedure available in an easy to understand manner. This is further supplemented by a nice animation clip of the laparoscopic approach. Links to related research and publications are provided for those interested in further reading.****

<http://www.asbs.org/>

This is the official website of the American Society for Bariatric Surgery. It provides an excellent source of information on the topic containing different sections for patients and healthcare professionals. Under the section 'Brief history and summary of bariatric surgery', many different surgical techniques are described in detail with coloured diagrams and key references. Details of upcoming courses and meetings can be easily found using tabs along the top of the page. Abstracts from their official journal *Surgery for Obesity and Related Diseases* can be obtained through this site although full papers are accessible to members only. This is an excellent site worth visiting for both patients and surgical trainee.*****

<http://www.emedicine.com/med/topic1653.htm>

The eMedicine website does a very good overview on obesity in general with comprehensive coverage on the classifications, pathophysiology, epidemiology and medical treatment. In the bariatric surgery section, a list of standard procedures without illustration can be found. Results of some outcome studies (weight loss) following bariatric surgery are summarised. The site lacks detail in surgical techniques, but is definitely recommendable as background reading on obesity as a topic.****