Published in final edited form as:

J Card Fail. 2019 May ; 25(5): 372–379. doi:10.1016/j.cardfail.2019.04.001.

Sleeve Gastrectomy in obese, Zucker rats restores cardiac function and geometry towards a lean phenotype independent of weight-loss.

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Abstract

Introduction.—Bariatric surgery, including sleeve gastrectomy (SG), significantly improves cardiac geometry and function in patients with heart failure. In this study, we utilized the obese, Zucker rat as an animal model of heart failure with preserved ejection fraction (HFpEF) to test the hypothesis that a SG will improve cardiac function independent of weight loss.

Methods and Results.—Obese, male Zucker rats underwent SG, pair-fed sham, or ad-lib sham surgery. Lean Zucker rats also underwent ad-lib sham surgery. Echocardiograms were performed pre- and at 6 weeks post-operatively. Obese SG and obese pair-fed sham rats had similar body weights post-operatively. Obese sleeve gastrectomy and lean, ad-lib, sham rats had a significant increase in post-operative stroke volume, left ventricular internal diameter in diastole and systole. SG preserved systolic function and significantly improved isovolumetric relaxation time (13.9 ± 2.4 ms to 11.1 ± 2.1 ms, $p=0.02$) independent of weight loss.

Discussion.—SG has a beneficial impact on both systolic and diastolic cardiac function in obese, Zucker rats towards a lean phenotype independent of weight loss and caloric restriction. These findings may represent a weight-loss independent mechanism generated from the gastrointestinal tract that has the potential to improve diastolic dysfunction independent of obesity status and translate to patients with HFpEF.

Keywords

heart failure with preserved ejection fraction; obesity; bariatric surgery; diastolic function

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST There are no conflicts of interest for Tammy L. Kindel MD, PhD, Tom Foster BS, Leanne Harmann BA, and Jennifer Strande MD, PhD.

Introduction

Heart failure with preserved ejection fraction (HFpEF) is the most common form of heart failure and is closely associated with obesity [1,2]. HFpEF, in which the global left ventricular systolic function or ejection fraction (EF) is preserved ($>50\%$), is a syndrome caused primarily of impaired cardiac relaxation and diastolic filling resulting in a decreased stroke volume and increased circulating blood volume. The consequential increased left ventricular pressures and decreased cardiac output results in the symptoms of heart failure. The cause for impaired diastolic function in obesity-associated HFpEF is unknown but likely related to systemic inflammation, an increased plasma volume, and sodium retention [3]. The risk of heart failure increases 5% for men and 7% for women with every increase in body mass index (BMI) point [4]. In patients with HFpEF, there is an increased risk of all-cause mortality and heart failure-related hospitalization with a BMI $>35 \text{ kg/m}^2$ [5].

Bariatric surgery significantly improves both symptoms of heart failure and cardiac geometry and function including decreased left ventricular hypertrophy and dilation along with improved systolic function [6–8]. There is an almost universal improvement in diastolic function after bariatric surgery due to decreased relaxation time of the left ventricle [6]. It is possible that the benefits of bariatric surgery are related to the significant post-operative weight loss alone. Unfortunately, it has been very difficult to study the effect of significant weight loss outside of bariatric surgery due to the exceptionally high failure rate of dieting and pharmacotherapy in this patient population. Alexander et al studied nine severely obese patients who lost significant weight with dieting and had decreases in systemic arterial pressure, stroke volume, and cardiac output without improvements in myocardial hypertrophy and ventricular compliance [9]. More modest weight loss through dieting decreases left ventricular mass with variable changes in diastolic function [10,11]. The lack of efficacy of dieting on cardiac function compared to bariatric surgery suggests a weight-loss independent mechanism initiated by altering the gastrointestinal tract with bariatric surgery that improves post-operative cardiac function in heart failure patients.

Sleeve gastrectomy (SG) is a commonly performed bariatric surgery in which the greater curvature of the stomach is removed. We have previously found that 44% of high-fat fed Wistar rats that underwent a SG maintained normal systolic function without an effect on diastolic function, compared to 0% in control rats [12]. The variable improvement in cardiac function was weight-loss independent suggesting a potential novel, metabolic role of bariatric surgery to beneficially alter the entero-cardiac axis and improve cardiac function. While the Wistar rat develops obesity with a high-fat diet, it is an insulin sensitive model; therefore, we hypothesized that a more robust rodent model of cardiac dysfunction encompassing components of obesity-associated HFpEF including insulin resistance, cardiac hypertrophy and diastolic impairment would enhance the impact of a SG on cardiac dysfunction. In this study, we utilized the obese Zucker rat as a model of metabolic syndrome and cardiac dysfunction to test the hypothesis that SG will improve cardiac function independent of weight loss.

METHODS

Study Design.

Zucker rats were used as an outbred model of obesity and metabolic syndrome with insulin resistance and dyslipidemia to study the effect of SG on cardiac function. Obese (strain 185) or lean (strain 186) male, Zucker rats were purchased at 5 weeks of age (Charles River Laboratories, United States). All rats were housed in pairs prior to surgery and started on Purina Diet 5008 at 8 weeks of age. A pre-operative echocardiogram was performed at 12 weeks of age on all rats. Zucker rats were stratified into four different surgical groups: obese SG, obese pair-fed sham, obese ad-lib sham, and lean ad-lib sham surgery. Obese rats were stratified into the three groups matched for ejection fraction and body weight. After surgery, animals were individually caged for the measurement of body weight and food intake and resumed Purina diet 5008 72 hours after surgery until study completion. All groups underwent a post-operative echocardiogram at 6 weeks. After 5–7 days of recovery, animals were euthanized with collection of blood and ex vivo heart weights. This study and all procedures were approved by the Medical College of Wisconsin's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee.

Surgical Procedures and Pair-feeding.

Solid food was replaced with Vanilla Ensure (Abbott, Lake Forest, IL) for post-operative recovery starting 24 hours prior to surgery and for 72 hours after surgery. All animals were fasted overnight but had ad libitum access to water. SG and pair-fed sham surgeries were performed as previously described including pre-operative antibiotic prophylaxis with enrofloxacin (10 mg/kg subcutaneously), Buprenorphine SR for peri-operative pain control and subcutaneous saline bolus (20 cc/kg) on post-operative day 0 and 1 [12]. In brief, after division of the greater curve fibro-fatty tissue, the stomach was opened on the lateral segment removing any additional stomach contents, and then the stomach divided with an endoscopic stapling device (Endopath ETS-Flex, 45 mm white load; Ethicon, Cincinnati, OH) to include all of the non-glandular stomach and glandular lateral fundus. For sham animals, the same procedure was followed except the stomach was not divided. SG induces a decrease in food intake. Pair-feeding was performed in one obese, sham Zucker group to create rats that would be calorically-restricted to the exact same degree over time as obese, SG rats. Obese, pair-fed sham rats were given the same amount of daily food consumed by the obese SG rats for the same post-operative day throughout the study period. For example, if the average food intake of obese SG rats was 15g on post-operative day #15, all obese, pair-fed sham rats would receive only 15 g of food for their respective post-operative day #15.

Cardiac Function Analysis.

Rodent echocardiograms were performed in anesthetized (2% isoflurane) rats at 13 weeks of age (1 weeks pre-operatively) and at 6 weeks post-operatively. Measurements and data analyses were performed as previously published by a small animal echocardiogram technician blinded to the study groups [12,13]. Animals were studied in the left lateral decubitus position with a commercially available echocardiographic system (Vivid 7, General Electric, with an 11-MHz M12-L linear array transducer, GE Healthcare, Waukesha,

WI). Echocardiograms were performed from the cardiac short axis of the left ventricle at the papillary muscle level, using the anatomical M-mode feature of the Vivid 7 echo. A M-mode display was generated from raw data 2D images with the line selected passing through the anterior and inferior segments. Stroke volume was measured by subtracting left ventricular end systolic volume from end diastolic volume. EF was measured using the formula: $EF = \text{stroke volume} / \text{end diastolic volume} \times 100$. The left ventricular mass was derived from the anteroseptal thickness and inferolateral thickness using the formula: $\text{left ventricular mass} = 0.8 + (1.04[(\text{inferolateral thickness} + \text{left ventricular internal diameter in diastole} + \text{anteroseptal thickness})^3 - (\text{left ventricular internal diameter in diastole})^3] + 0.6$. Diastolic function was measured by tissue Doppler including the isovolumetric relaxation time, E wave, and mitral annulus (e') velocity. Three consecutive heart beats were measured and the average used for analysis.

Hormone Analysis.

Blood was collected in EDTA collecting tubes from the inferior vena cava at the time of euthanasia at 7 weeks post-operatively. Fasting glucose was measured immediately in duplicate using a handheld glucometer. Samples were kept on ice and then spun for 10 minutes at 4000 g with plasma collected for the measurement of insulin, cholesterol, and triglyceride. Insulin concentrations were determined using a commercially available rat, sandwich enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay kit (MilliporeSigma, Burlington, MA). Cholesterol and triglycerides were measured using an enzymatic detection method by an ACE Alera clinical chemistry system (Alfa Wassermann, West Caldwell, NJ). Free fatty acids were measured in duplicate using a commercially available Free Fatty Acid Quantification kit (Sigma-Aldrich, St. Louis MO).

Histology.

Under general anesthesia, the sternum was divided and the heart excised in total. The aortic root was infused with up to 30 mL of a 1.5% solution of potassium chloride in phosphate buffered solution to arrest the heart in diastole. After trimming any excess attached tissue or epicardial fat, the heart was blotted and weighed. The left mid ventricle was sharply sectioned and placed immediately in OTC medium, frozen in dry ice and stored at -80°C until sectioned. Tissue sections were stained for hematoxylin and eosin (H&E) for cardiomyocyte size, Masson trichrome stain for interstitial fibrosis, and Oil Red O for lipid deposition. Cardiomyocyte size was measured from each animal as a total of fifty random cells per heart section to give a mean size for each individual. Slides were scanned at 40X magnification using the Nanozoomer 2.0-HT (Hamamatsu, Japan) digital slide scanning system (Children's Research Institute's Imaging Core). High resolution whole slide scanned images were imported into Visiopharm software (Denmark) and using the imager module collagen positive regions were identified by thresholding the specific image channel filter compared to the the rest of the tissue (sum of muscle, nuclear and collagen region without any interstitial space). All original images were processed with this preset threshold and linear Bayesian classification to generate a processed image. Total collagen positive area per ROI was measured in microns and represented as a percentage of the total tissue area.

Statistics.

All values are presented as the mean $\pm$ standard deviation. Comparisons of results between pre and post-operative time points for each group was performed as a student's t-test with multiple groups at the same time point as a one-way analysis of variance with post-hoc analysis performed for pairwise multiple comparisons using the Holm-Sidak method with equal variance and assumed normality. In cases of unequal variance, a Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance of ranks was performed with post-hoc pairwise comparisons by Dunn's methods. Values were determined statistically significant if $p < 0.05$. Sigmatat V 4.0 was used for all statistical analysis.

RESULTS

SG significantly reduces body weight compared to sham surgery.

Obese or lean strains of Zucker rats were started on Purina diet 5008 at 8 weeks of age. Once 13 weeks-old, the obese rats underwent SG or sham surgery after matching for EF and body weight. All lean rats underwent sham surgery at 13 weeks of age. Our long-term survival rate for obese SG rats was 92% ($n=11$), 75% for obese, pair-fed, sham rats ($n=6$) and 100% for obese, ad-lib sham ($n=8$) and lean sham rats ($n=8$). There was no significant difference in body weights of the 3 obese Zucker rat groups pre-operatively, obese SG 515.7 ± 36.4 g, obese, pair-fed sham 532.5 ± 27.0 g, and obese, ad-lib sham 525.1 ± 23.4 g. All obese Zucker rat groups weighed significantly more than the lean sham group for the six weeks post-operatively (Figure 1). There was no difference in post-operative body weights between obese SG and obese, pair-fed, sham groups at any time point post-operatively with the obese SG group weighing 615.4 ± 37.7 g at 6 weeks post-operatively compared to the obese, pair-fed, sham group weighing 607.8 ± 28.4 g ($p=0.63$). Due to a significant reduction in post-operative food intake compared to obese, ad-lib sham rats, obese SG rats and obese, pair-fed, sham rats weighed significantly less than obese, ad-lib sham rats at every week post-operatively. Obese SG and obese, pair-fed, sham rats ate a similar amount of cumulative food over the 6-week post-operative period (obese SG 1170.7 ± 62.8 g vs obese, pair-fed sham 1158 g, $p=0.61$). However, as shown in Figure 2, all obese groups ate more than the lean sham group over the post-operative study period.

SG in obese Zucker rats preserves systolic function with increased SV and preserved cardiac mass.

There are multiple inherent differences in cardiac function between the outbred obese and lean Zucker rat by echocardiogram performed pre-operatively at eleven weeks of age (Table 1). The obese Zucker rat has significantly increased left ventricular wall thickness, internal left ventricular diameter in diastole and systole, and volumes (end systolic, end diastolic, and stroke volume) with preserved fractional shortening and EF compared to lean Zucker rats. Obese Zucker rats also had an increased left ventricular mass but a significant decrease in left ventricular mass compared to body weight with impaired diastolic function as indicated by a significantly increased isovolumetric relaxation time of 14.2 ± 8.2 ms compared to lean Zucker rats with an isovolumetric relaxation time of 10.3 ± 1.9 ms, $p < 0.001$.

As shown in Table 2, echocardiograms performed pre-operatively were compared for measure of both systolic and diastolic function for each group to six week post-operative echocardiograms. Obese SG and lean Zucker rats were the only groups to significantly increase stroke volume from pre-op (obese SG; 1.04 ± 0.16 mL to 1.25 ± 0.25 mL, $p=0.03$; lean: 0.87 ± 0.06 mL vs 0.97 ± 0.09 mL, $p=0.03$). For both obese SG and lean Zucker groups, there was also a significant increase in left ventricular internal diameter in both systole and diastole post-operatively. Obese, pair-fed and obese, ad-lib sham rats had no difference in stroke volume, left ventricular internal diameter in diastole or systole post-operatively compared to pre-operative values. Obese SG rats were the only group to maintain % left ventricular mass to body weight with $0.30 \pm 0.02\%$ pre-operatively and $0.29 \pm 0.04\%$ post-operatively ($p=0.25$), with the three remaining groups, including lean Zucker rats, displaying a significant decrease. Systolic function, as measured by both fractional shortening or EF as shown in Figure 3, was preserved post-operatively only in obese SG rats with a pre-operative EF of $83.8 \pm 7.8\%$ and post-operative EF of $79.5 \pm 6.3\%$, $p=0.17$. Lean Zucker rats also had a decline in EF with a EF of $89.3 \pm 4.2\%$ pre-operatively and $82.0 \pm 7.3\%$ post-operatively, $p=0.03$. Although there were no echocardiogram differences between obese SG and obese, pair-fed, sham rats pre-operatively, obese SG rats had a significantly higher left ventricular mass and % left ventricular mass to body weight post-operatively compared to obese, pair-fed rats (Table 2). These differences in cardiac parameters exist between obese SG and obese, pair-fed, sham rats despite the two groups being similar in post-operative age, diet, body weight, and food-intake.

At the time of euthanasia, intact hearts were excised, weighed and analyzed relative to body weight. Compared to lean sham Zucker rats, both obese, ad-lib and obese, pair-fed, sham rats had significantly smaller heart weight to body weight ratios. Obese SG rats had similar %heart weight to body weight compared to lean sham rats ($0.23 \pm 0.03\%$ vs $0.25 \pm 0.02\%$, $p=0.07$) (Figure 4). There was no difference in cardiomyocyte area between lean ($391.8 \pm 42.0 \mu\text{m}^2$) and obese SG ($435.7 \pm 2.9 \mu\text{m}^2$), obese ad-lib sham ($555.4 \pm 8.9 \mu\text{m}^2$) and obese, pair-fed, sham groups ($363.5 \pm 45.7 \mu\text{m}^2$). There was no significant difference in the amount of interstitial collagen deposition by histology (Figure 5) and quantification (Figure 6) between lean and obese Zucker groups (obese SG: $6.28 \pm 0.55\%$, obese pair-fed sham: $6.71 \pm 1.53\%$, obese ad-lib sham: $6.34 \pm 0.52\%$, and lean sham: $5.75 \pm 0.62\%$). There was also no difference in Oil Red O quantification between lean Zucker rats and obese SG, pair-fed sham, or ad-lib sham groups.

SG significantly improves diastolic relaxation independent of weight loss.

As shown in Table 3, obesity significantly impaired diastolic function at 6 weeks post-operatively in obese, ad-lib sham rats with a significant decrease in deceleration time, e' , and E/e' compared to pre-operative values. Obese SG rats had a significant improvement in isovolumetric relaxation time from 13.9 ± 2.4 ms to 11.1 ± 2.1 ms, $p=0.02$ that was not seen in any other group. This improvement post-operatively in obese, SG rats was significantly different from obese, pair-fed, sham rats with an isovolumetric relaxation time of 16.0 ± 5.4 ms ($p=0.02$).

SG decreases serum cholesterol independent of weight loss.

Prior to euthanasia at approximately 6–7 weeks post-operatively, blood was taken from the inferior vena cava and processed for plasma metrics of glucose and lipid homeostasis. As shown in Table 4, all obese Zucker groups (obese SG; obese, pair-fed sham; and obese, ad-lib sham) had significantly elevated non-fasting insulin concentrations compared to lean Zucker rats. There was no difference in glucose or free fatty acids concentrations among any of the obese groups compared to lean rats. SG uniquely restored cholesterol concentrations to that of lean Zucker sham rats ($p=0.44$) where obese pair-fed sham ($p=0.05$) and obese, ad-lib sham ($p=0.01$) cholesterol concentrations were significantly higher than lean Zucker rats. Triglyceride concentrations were significantly elevated in obese, ad-lib, sham rats compared to lean, sham rats (3164.4 ± 2992 mg/dL vs. 200.2 ± 58.7 mg/dL, $p=0.05$).

DISCUSSION

We have found that independent of weight loss, body weight, calorie restriction, and dietary changes, obese SG rats have a beneficial change in cardiac function towards a lean phenotype driven by improved left ventricular diastolic relaxation and filling which preserves systolic function. Unlike obese, pair-fed sham and obese, ad-lib sham rats, the heart in obese SG and lean sham rats responds to weight-related expansion of plasma volume by dilating the ventricle. This is a normal cardiac compensatory response to increased volume [2]. In obese, pair-fed, sham and obese, ad-lib sham rats, there is inadequate dilation associated with impaired relaxation and marginal changes in end diastolic volume despite an increased post-operative body weight with associated increased circulating blood volumes. With inappropriate cardiac accommodation to the volume demands of weight gain, the stroke volume of obese, pair-fed, sham and obese, ad-lib sham rats does not increase as it normally does in lean rats and as found after SG. Additional studies supporting this mechanism would include in vivo cardiac hemodynamics where we would expect to find elevated left ventricular filling pressures in both obese, pair-fed, sham and obese, ad-lib sham rats leading to symptoms of heart failure with reduced exercise capacity compared to obese SG and lean sham rats.

Similar to our previous publication with SG in Wistar rats, SG in obese Zucker rats preserved EF with a significant reduction in EF in all other sham models, including lean controls [12]. This finding suggests that SG protects against obesity- and age-related decline in EF in Zucker rats. There is a growing appreciation among bariatric surgeons and heart failure cardiologists that bariatric surgery has the potential to significantly improve systolic function. A recent meta-analysis found a significant improvement in EF after bariatric surgery [8]. Unlike control subjects, bariatric surgery significantly improved EF, with improvements >10% significantly more likely to occur in bariatric surgery patients than control patients [14]. Further, systolic function after bariatric surgery is more likely in patients with non-ischemic cardiomyopathy and long-standing obesity implying that the mechanism for systolic function improvement after bariatric surgery may be due to reversal of altered substrate utilization, cardiac insulin resistance, oxidative stress, and/or cardiac steatosis, all hallmarks of obesity-cardiomyopathy [15,16].

Bariatric surgery in patients with preserved systolic function reduces left ventricular mass, wall thickness and blood pressure [17]. Cuspidi et al published a systemic review of 23 studies consistently finding a reduction in left ventricular mass and wall thickness [18]. A recent review of publications on the effect of bariatric surgery on diastolic function shows an almost universal increase in the peak early mitral flow velocity compared to late mitral flow velocity (E/A ratio) with significant reductions in isovolumetric relaxation times [6]. Mikhalkova specifically studied the impact of bariatric surgery on cardiac function in patients with HFpEF. Bariatric surgery significantly decreased cardiac mass, left ventricular wall thickness, heart failure-related symptoms and left ventricular relaxation [19]. Our animal study similarly found an improvement in left ventricular relaxation as implicated by the improvement in isovolumetric relaxation time in obese SG rats only and supports that diastolic function improvements after bariatric surgery may be mediated by more than just post-surgical weight loss, and instead be due to weight-loss independent changes mediated from the gastrointestinal tract.

Although the pathophysiology of HFpEF is incompletely understood with no effective treatment, there is a strong association between HFpEF and metabolic diseases such as obesity, hypercholesterolemia, hypertension, and type 2 diabetes mellitus. Beyond atherosclerosis, hypercholesterolemia can be directly cardiotoxic due to the induction of oxidative stress and pro-inflammatory cytokines [20,21]. In mice, a cholesterol diet increases serum cholesterol, peroxynitrite-mediated cardiac dysfunction and oxidative stress via increased expression of nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide phosphate oxidase [22]. As we found only obese SG rats had a similar cholesterol concentration as lean sham rats, a reduction in systemic hypercholesterolemia and subsequent effect on oxidative stress may be a critical mediator for the beneficial effect of SG on diastolic function.

Murine models of HFpEF are inherently limited to capture all facets of clinical obesity-associated HFpEF, including obesity, insulin resistance/type 2 diabetes, exercise intolerance, peripheral edema, increased left ventricular hypertrophy/mass, arterial stiffness, disturbed ventricular-arterial coupling, myocardial fibrosis, cardiomyocyte hypertrophy, decreased intra-myocardial capillary density, inappropriately depressed elevation of natriuretic peptides, and systemic inflammation [1]. However, Zucker rats are an excellent model of reproducible obesity, insulin resistance, metabolic abnormalities of hyperleptinemia, hypercholesterolemia, hypertriglyceridemia, but preserved glucose tolerance [23,24]. The Zucker model, as we have also confirmed in this study, has left ventricular hypertrophy with early diastolic dysfunction and, with age, progresses to moderate systolic dysfunction therefore representing a mixed model of heart failure with preserved and reduced EF. Our surgical model also does not parallel the post-bariatric process where patients have a dramatic change in post-operative diet to a protein enriched, very low fat and carbohydrate diet. Further, the SG rodent, as we and others have found, will generally lose weight initially but continue to gain weight post-operatively although not regaining weight back to obese, ad-lib sham controls (as is usually found with re-feeding after calorie restriction) limiting the comparison to clinical bariatric surgery.

CONCLUSIONS

This study is the first to find a weight-loss independent effect of SG on diastolic function with restoration of cardiac function and geometry towards a lean phenotype. We also found a preservation of both obesity and age-related systolic function in obese SG Zucker rats. These finding may represent a novel, potential surgical therapy for patients with HFpEF to reverse diastolic dysfunction and preserve systolic function independent of post-operative obesity status and weight-loss.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Rodent echocardiographic core services were provided by the Medical College of Wisconsin small animal echocardiography core in the division of cardiovascular medicine. The project described was supported by the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences, National Institutes of Health, Award Number KL2TR001438 (T. Kindel). The content is solely the responsibility of the author(s) and does not necessarily represent the official views of the NIH.

Abbreviations

HFpEF	heart failure with preserved ejection fraction
EF	ejection fraction
BMI	body mass index
SG	sleeve gastrectomy

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Figure 1.

The change in post-operative body weight over time after sleeve gastrectomy or sham surgery (performed at time 0).(*) denotes $p < 0.05$ for the designated surgical group compared to lean sham Zucker rats at each time point. Data presented as the mean $\pm$ standard deviation.

Figure 2.

The cumulative food intake of each surgical group for 6 post-operative weeks (n=6–11/group). Food intake of the pair-fed sham group was matched to the daily intake of the sleeve gastrectomy group. (*) denotes $p < 0.05$ for the designated surgical group compared to lean sham Zucker rats. Data presented as the mean $\pm$ standard deviation.

Figure 3.

Measurement of pre- and 6-week post-operative ejection fraction by echocardiogram in all four surgical groups (n= 6–11/group). (*) denotes $p < 0.05$ for the designated surgical group compared to pre-operative values. Data presented as the mean $\pm$ standard deviation.

Figure 4.

Percentage of total heart weight to body weight. (n=6–10/group). (*) denotes $p < 0.05$ comparing the designated surgical group compared to lean sham Zucker rats. Data presented as the mean $\pm$ standard deviation.

Figure 5.

Masson's trichrome staining (light blue color) of cardiac tissue sections (20X).

Histopathological analysis of cardiac tissue sections of the mid-left ventricle from the lean Zucker sham rats (A), obese sleeve gastrectomy Zucker rats (B), obese, pair-fed Zucker sham rats (C), and obese, ad-lib Zucker sham rats (D).

Figure 6.
Quantification of Masson's trichrome (black bars) and Oil Red O staining (grey bars) of left ventricular cardiac tissue sections.

Table 1.

Difference in pre-operative cardiac function between obese and lean Zucker rats.

	Lean Zucker (n=8)	Obese Zucker (n=25)	p-value
BW (g)	355.8 ± 22.6	521.4 ± 28.2	<0.001*
IVSd (cm)	0.17 ± 0.02	0.19 ± 0.02	0.10
LVIDd (cm)	0.76 ± 0.02	0.85 ± 0.06	<0.001*
LVIDs (cm)	0.34 ± 0.05	0.42 ± 0.09	0.03*
LVPWd (cm)	0.16 ± 0.02	0.18 ± 0.02	0.05*
EDV (mL)	0.98 ± 0.09	1.32 ± 0.24	<0.001*
ESV (mL)	0.11 ± 0.05	0.20 ± 0.11	0.03*
EF (%)	89.3 ± 4.2	85.4 ± 6.7	0.13
FS (%)	55.2 ± 5.7	50.9 ± 8.3	0.18
SV (mL)	0.87 ± 0.06	1.12 ± 0.18	<0.001*
LVM (g)	1.33 ± 0.08	1.58 ± 0.12	<0.001*
%LVM/BW	0.37 ± 0.03	0.30 ± 0.02	<0.001*
IVRT (ms)	10.3 ± 1.9	14.2 ± 8.2	<0.001*
E (m/s)	1.35 ± 0.11	1.35 ± 0.16	0.94
Decel time (ms)	47.8 ± 4.3	46.7 ± 8.2	0.71
e' (m/s)	0.10 ± 0.03	0.08 ± 0.02	0.05*
E/e'	14.8 ± 5.0	17.8 ± 4.3	0.09

Data are presented as the mean ± standard deviation. Statistical significance determined at $p < 0.05$ comparing lean vs obese zucker rats (*). IVSd=inter-ventricular septum in diastole, LVIDd=left ventricular internal diameter in diastole, LVIDs=left ventricular internal diameter in systole, LVPWd= left ventricular posterior wall in diastole, EDV= end diastolic volume, ESV= end systolic volume, EF= ejection fraction; FS= fractional shortening; SV= stroke volume; LVM= left ventricle mass; BW= body weight; IVRT= isovolumetric relaxation time; E= E wave; e'= mitral annulus velocity.

Table 2.

Effect of sleeve gastrectomy or sham surgery on cardiac structure and left ventricular systolic function at 2 weeks pre-operatively and 6 weeks post-operatively in Zucker rats.

	IVSd (cm)	LVIDd (cm)	LVIDs (cm)	LVPWd (cm)	EDV (mL)	ESV (mL)	SV (mL)	LVM (g)	%LVM /BW
Obese Sleeve Gastrectomy (n=11)									
<i>pre</i>	0.19	0.83	0.43	0.18	1.26	0.22	1.04	1.57	0.30
<i>post</i>	0.20	0.9*	0.58*	0.20*	1.47	0.33	1.25*	1.79*#	0.29#
Obese Pair-Fed Sham (n=6)									
<i>pre</i>	0.20	0.86	0.44	0.18	1.35	0.22	1.13	1.63	0.32
<i>post</i>	0.19	0.86	0.51	0.17	1.36	0.34	1.03	1.57	0.25*
Obese ad-lib Sham (n=8)									
<i>pre</i>	0.17	0.86	0.39	0.18	1.37	0.16	1.21	1.54	0.29
<i>post</i>	0.20*	0.85	0.51	0.21*	1.35	0.37	0.98	1.74*	0.26*
Lean ad-lib Sham (n=8)									
<i>pre</i>	0.17	0.76	0.34	0.16	0.98	0.11	0.87	1.33	0.37
<i>post</i>	0.18	0.81*	0.44*	0.17	1.17*	0.21*	0.97*	1.44*	0.33*

Data are presented as the mean. Statistical significance determined at $p < 0.05$ comparing pre-operative vs post-operative values within groups (*) or comparing sleeve gastrectomy vs pair-fed (#) for the same time point. IVSd=inter-ventricular septum in diastole, LVIDd=left ventricular internal diameter in diastole, LVIDs=left ventricular internal diameter in systole, LVPWd= left ventricular posterior wall in diastole, EDV= end diastolic volume, ESV= end systolic volume, SV= stroke volume; LVM= left ventricle mass; BW=body weight.

Table 3.

Effect of SG or Sham Surgery on Diastolic Function at 2 Weeks Preoperatively and 6 Weeks Postoperatively in Zucker Rats

	IVRT (ms)	E (m/s)	Decel time (ms)	e' (m/s)	E/e'
Obese SG (n = 11)					
<i>Pre</i>	13.9 ± 2.4	1.29 ± 0.15	45.0 ± 9.2	0.07 ± 0.02	19.8 ± 4.4
<i>Post</i>	11.1 ± 2.1*†	1.36 ± 0.11	44.1 ± 5.4	0.08 ± 0.02	18.2 ± 4.1
Obese pair-fed sham (n = 6)					
<i>Pre</i>	13.4 ± 4.2	1.40 ± 0.18	49.6 ± 10.1	0.08 ± 0.02	19.3 ± 4.5
<i>Post</i>	16.0 ± 5.4	1.26 ± 0.19	40.0 ± 5.2	0.07 ± 0.02	17.6 ± 6.4
Obese ad-lib sham (n = 8)					
<i>Pre</i>	15.3 ± 1.7	1.40 ± 0.14	46.9 ± 5.1	0.10 ± 0.02	14.5 ± 1.4
<i>Post</i>	14.2 ± 3.2	1.36 ± 0.14	40.5 ± 5.3*	0.08 ± 0.02*	17.8 ± 2.6*
Lean ad-lib sham (n = 8)					
<i>Pre</i>	10.3 ± 1.9	1.35 ± 0.11	47.8 ± 4.3	0.1 ± 0.03	14.8 ± 5.0
<i>Post</i>	10.3 ± 1.9	1.33 ± 0.10	47.2 ± 8.6	0.08 ± 0.02	17.0 ± 3.2

Data are presented as the mean standard deviation. Statistical significance determined at $P < .05$ comparing § preoperative versus postoperative values within groups (*) or comparing sleeve gastrectomy versus pair-fed (†) for the same time point. IVRT, isovolumetric relaxation time; E, E wave; e', mitral annulus velocity.

Table 4.

Post-operative non-fasting plasma parameters of glucose and lipid metabolism.

	Glucose (mg/dL)	Insulin (ng/mL)	Cholesterol (mg/dL)	Triglycerides (mg/dL)	Free Fatty Acids (nmol/ μ L)
<i>Obese Sleeve Gastrectomy</i>	113.9 $\pm$ 13.6	13.4 $\pm$ 4.2 *	213.6 $\pm$ 42.6	725.1 $\pm$ 430.1	0.75 $\pm$ 0.8
<i>Obese Pair-fed Sham</i>	138.8 $\pm$ 37.4	15.0 $\pm$ 2.8 *	370.6 $\pm$ 100.3 *	1167.2 $\pm$ 633.9	0.78 $\pm$ 0.3
<i>Obese ad-lib Sham</i>	176 $\pm$ 128.5	16.0 $\pm$ 4.4 *	547.9 $\pm$ 353.0 *	3164.4 $\pm$ 2992.0 *	1.83 $\pm$ 1.3
<i>Lean Sham</i>	124 $\pm$ 20.5	3.7 $\pm$ 1.4	119.4 $\pm$ 25.5	200.2 $\pm$ 58.7	0.40 $\pm$ 0.4

Blood samples were drawn at 6 weeks post-operatively at the time of euthanasia. Data are mean $\pm$ SD. N= 5–11 for each group. Statistical significance determined at $p < 0.05$.

(*) denotes significance between designated group compared to lean sham animals.