

# Sexuality amongst heterosexual men with morbid obesity in a bariatric surgery programme: A qualitative study

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## Abstract

**Aim and Objectives:** To describe and understand the experiences of sexuality amongst heterosexual men diagnosed with morbid obesity (MO) who are in a bariatric surgery programme. **Background:** Morbid obesity is a chronic metabolic disease that affects men's physical, psychological and sexual health. Evidence suggests that MO could be linked to anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, sexual life and social disorders. **Bariatric surgery** is a reliable method for weight loss in patients with MO. **Design:** This is a qualitative study based on Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, and the COREQ checklist was employed to report on the current study. **Methods:** Convenience and purposive sampling was carried out and included 24 in-depth interviews with heterosexual men with MO in a bariatric surgery programme between October 2018–March 2019 in Spain. **Results:** Two main themes emerged from the analysis: (a) a corporality which is judged and condemned; and (b) adapting sexual practices to bariatric surgery. **Conclusions:** Men with MO reject a body that limits their physical, social and sexual life. A negative body image and low self-esteem, which do not respond to the traditional masculine role or new masculinities, reduce men's self-concept. Men with MO feel rejection, stigma and isolation. Support from their partner is fundamental to adapt. **Relevance to clinical practice:** The results of the study draw attention to how heterosexual men with MO experience their sexuality in a bariatric surgery programme and the challenges nurses face. Recognising the problem, helping to develop coping strategies or referring to specialists in sexuality could improve the quality of life in patients and their partners.

## Author keywords

bariatric surgery  
male sexual dysfunction  
morbid obesity  
qualitative research