

Onetime 'world's heaviest man' has second surgery in Mexico

A Mexican once certified as the heaviest man in the world is recovering from a second stomach-reduction surgery that doctors hope will help him shed more than 200 kilograms (440 pounds), the medical center treating him reported Thursday.

Juan Pedro Franco, 33, who once weighed in at a stunning 595 kilos—about the same as a male polar bear—began a weight-loss program a year ago, bringing his current weight to 366 kilos.

After the operation Wednesday in the western city of Zapopan, Franco hopes to get down to a less-extreme 120 kilos, said a statement from Gastric Bypass Mexico.

“Juan Pedro did very well in this surgery,” said surgeon Jose Antonio Castaneda, who was quoted in the statement. “We are very optimistic.”

He said Franco should be released in the next few days.

The operation Thursday, which followed an earlier surgery in May, was performed by minimally invasive laparoscopy. This crucial procedure involved dividing Franco's stomach in half to give it a much smaller capacity, while also removing a section of intestine.

If all goes well, Castaneda said, the patient will be able to stop taking drugs for diabetes and high blood pressure. He will also, hopefully, be able to walk again—for the first time in seven years.

The patient said he felt considerable anxiety, but also hope, as he looks ahead.

“I was more nervous than in the first surgery,” he said, “but I knew that this second surgery was a priority in my life if I am to be able to move forward.”

He said he was excited to be getting “closer and closer to having a healthy weight.”

The Guinness World Records organization certified early this year that Franco, who was weighed last December at 595 kilos, was considered the heaviest living man.

That record had been held by another Mexican, Manuel Uribe, who in 2007 weighed in at 597 kilos. But he died in May 2016.

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