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Aidan Radnedge - 4th July, 2011

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## Woman's stomach 'explodes' after she lost 14 stone with gastric band

**Samantha Haworth is lucky to be alive after a gastric band caused her stomach to 'explode' following her 14-stone weight loss.**

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Samantha Haworth's gastric

band slipped inside her, almost killing her, after she had lost 14 stone (Picture: BPM/Coventry Telegraph)

The 25-year-old had the device fitted when her weight soared to 177kg (28st), putting her health at risk.

Ms Haworth lost 88kg (14st) after the operation but, two years later, a rare complication meant the band 'slipped', turning septic and leaving her in agony.

After her stomach ruptured, surgeons gave her just a five per cent chance of survival.

Ms Haworth said: 'When they opened me up, they saw there was no stomach left – it had exploded.

'I was only given 15 minutes to live unless they did something drastic.

'They even had researchers trying to work out what to do as police escorted a transplant doctor from Birmingham to save my life.'

Ruptures caused by slipped gastric bands are a recognised risk.

But they are so rare no one saw the warning signs when Ms Haworth, from Coventry, began suffering chest pains in February.

Her dietician told her to see a doctor if it continued but she never did because she thought it was merely heartburn.

'I didn't like to complain because I thought it was my own fault I needed a gastric band, so a little pain served me right,' she added.

'By April, I was getting stabbing pains in my chest. I lay on the floor sobbing, "I'm dying".'

As the pain spread, she was taken to Coventry's University Hospital on May 2, where X-rays revealed air pockets in her abdomen.

Before she could be examined by surgeons, her vital signs plummeted.

She said: 'I knew straight away I was dying.'

Her stomach was pieced together 'like a jigsaw' and she was put on a life support machine.

But she defied the odds and is now recovering.

Gastric bands are used to suppress patients' appetites.

Ms Haworth said: 'I'm not trying to scare other people off having one. I just want them to know things can go wrong.'

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