



## PRESS RELEASE

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Degree: A Battle Lost?**

**TX: Tuesday 23 October at 8pm**

Early this year, 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree brought you the story of 19-year-old Hermina Rakgaole from Hammanskraal. Hermina had a rare metabolic disorder that caused her to gain weight at an abnormal rate.

When 3<sup>rd</sup> degree first met her, she weighed a staggering 360 kilograms and was bed-ridden. She could not go to school, go-out with her friends or even bath herself. Despite obesity having been declared by the World Health Organisation as a chronic illness, Hermina's medical aid refused to pay for gastric by-pass surgery that would help reduce her weight and she was left to die.

Helpless and desperate her parents got in touch with 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree. And only after the story was aired did Oxygen Medical Aid agree to pay for Hermina's life saving surgery. Hermina responded favourably to the surgical procedure and her weight began to disappear almost immediately. Within three months she had lost over 60 kilograms.

But last month something went horribly wrong and Hermina died in hospital. Did her medical aid respond too late or is the hospital to blame for her sudden and mysterious death?