

The Bariatric Bulletin of the West Penn Bariatric Surgery Center

April 2007

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The Staff

Surgeons:

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Clinical Coordinators:

Julie Maurer, PA-C
Kathleen Cenci, RN

Physician Assistants:

Nicole Hayden, PA-C
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Dietitians:

Megan Drudy, RD, LDN
Dana Opp, RD, LDN
Hortensia Blake, RD, LDN
Cindy Cotters, RD, LDN

Psychologists:

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Support Group

The next support group will be on **Monday, April 16, 2007** in the Wintergarden Conference Center at West Penn Hospital (1st floor, across from the cafeteria) at **6:30 pm**. The speaker will be dietitian, Megan Drudy. At **6:00 pm**, there will be an informational session presented by one of the surgeons. **It is mandatory for pre-op patients to attend at least one of these support groups before surgery.** This support group is for people who are considering a gastric bypass, people who have had surgery, and friends and family. Hope to see you there!

Post-op Group

Dr. Tom Petrone is presently leading a support group for up to 12 people who have already had surgery. The next one is scheduled for **Thursday, April 19, 2007 from 6-8pm pm** at West Penn Hospital in the Karen Jones room, 2nd floor, North Tower. Please contact Julie to reserve your spot. There is a fee of \$20 per patient and \$5 per guest for each 2-hour session. Limited financial assistance is available.

New Info Sessions

There will be 2 informational sessions on weight loss surgery held at West Penn affiliated locations in May. On **May 9**, there will be one at **Cannonsburg Hospital at 6:30 pm** in the McNary Conference Center. The speaker will be Dr. Gagné. On **May 10**, there will be one at the **Destination Wellness Center at Pittsburgh Mills** near Alle-Kiski Medical Center at 6:00 pm. The speaker will be Dr. Papasavas. Please encourage friends, family, co-workers, and whoever may be interested in weight loss surgery to attend one of these. If you would like fliers to post in your workplace, church, or other location, please contact Julie.

Patient Feature

Name: Clayton H.

Date of Surgery: 10-31-03

Pounds lost: 168

Best thing about weight loss:

"My general health is much better. I got rid of almost all of my medications and am more active. It was a life-saver for me."

Before



After



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Most surprising insight: "I was very surprised that my diabetes is gone and never returned. I feel so much better."

Comment: "If you are qualified for it, go for it. It is one of the best things I ever did in my life."

Lap-Band Insurance Coverage

Many people have been inquiring about insurance coverage for the Lap Band procedure. As of March, most major insurance companies in the area are now covering the Lap Band procedure, in addition to the gastric bypass procedure for weight loss. If you have questions, please free to contact Julie, or Debbie, our insurance specialist.

Nutrition Note

News! – We will now have 2 part-time dietitians at our West Penn office. Megan Drudy is returning from maternity leave, and we are pleased to welcome Cindy Cotters as a permanent addition to our staff. Cindy has worked in the OR at West Penn since 1998, and is from the Robinson area.

Tips from Dr. Tom

Losing "Emotional Weight" through Apology and Forgiveness

I recently attended the annual conference of the American Counseling Association. One of the workshops was about forgiveness and apology. Our bariatric patients often share stories with me about past difficulties and the trouble they sometimes have forgiving some wrong they have experienced. As they embark on the journey that takes them through the process of the surgery and the positive physical changes that follow, they talk to me about how they want to make positive emotional changes, too. I want to share some of the information from the workshop. Hopefully, as you let go of the physical weight you can let go of some of the emotional weight as well.

A genuine apology must have the following:

Acknowledgement of the wrongdoing, an expression of remorse, an offer to make up for the wrongdoing and a commitment to making change in the future. If it contains all of those parts, and you choose to accept it, the apology can be healing. It can: Restore self-respect, recognize similar values, assure that the offense was not your fault, provide safety in the relationship, repair the harm caused by offenses and promote meaningful conversation with the offending party.

The other side of the coin is forgiveness. Forgiveness is mostly a process that happens inside us where we release the negative thoughts and feelings for the offending person and gain some measure of acceptance of what happened. For some people it means a change in seeing themselves as a survivor instead of a victim. When we are able to experience both apology and forgiveness we can achieve the following benefits: Increased hopefulness, reduction in anxiety, decrease in depressed feelings and better family relationships.

Those benefits are similar to the emotional benefits that our patients tell me they hope to gain from the surgery. So, next time you are thinking about a situation where either you hurt someone else or another hurt you, check in with yourself to see if you are ready for the apology-forgiveness process and see if you can lose the emotional weight. Good luck!

Follow-Up

It is *very important* for you to follow-up with your surgeon on a regular basis. The regular follow-up schedule after surgery is at 2 weeks, then months 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 18, 24, then yearly. If you have missed any appointments, please contact the office ASAP

to schedule your next appointment.

Email Update

If you are receiving this newsletter by paper and would prefer email, or if you are receiving this via email and would prefer not to receive it, please email Julie at jmaurer@wpahs.org. Thank you!

Contact - to sign up for the post-op group, or to offer any ideas or suggestions, please contact Julie at jmaurer@wpahs.org or 412-235-5902.

Call our Event Line at 412-235-5913 for up-to-the-minute cancellations or changes.