

# The Bariatric Bulletin

of the West Penn Bariatric Surgery Center

August 2008

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[www.bariatricsurgerypittsburgh.com](http://www.bariatricsurgerypittsburgh.com)

## The Staff

### Surgeons:

Daniel J. Gagné, M.D.

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### Clinical Coordinators:

Karen Tissue, RN

Kathleen Cenci, RN

### Physician Assistants:

Nicole Houser, PA-C

Julie Maurer, PA-C

### Dietitian:

Cindy Cotters, RD, LDN

### Psychologists:

Thomas Petrone, Ed.D.

Maura Krushinski, Ed.D.

### Insurance Specialist:

Maria Cannon

### Research Data Analyst:

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### Medical Assistants:

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### Secretaries:

Maggie Maiers

Cathy Phillips

Melanie Niemiec

Connie Titmus

Mary Bellisario

## *Issue Highlights*

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**Ranked #1 bariatric surgery program in Pennsylvania, top 5% in the nation by HealthGrades for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in a row!**



## Support Group

The next support group will be on **Monday, August 18, 2008** in the Wintergarden Conference Center at West Penn Hospital (1<sup>st</sup> floor, across from the cafeteria) at **6:30 pm**. This time we will be doing **patient stories**. If you have had surgery and want to share your story, please contact Karen Tissue at 412-235-5902. At **6:00 pm**, there will be an informational session presented by one of the bariatric surgeons. **It is mandatory for pre-op patients to attend at least one support group before surgery.** This support group is for people who are considering a gastric bypass, people who have had surgery, and friends and family.

## Patient Feature

**Name:** Christopher N

**Date of Surgery:** 7/21/2006

**Pounds lost:** 112 lbs

**Best thing about weight loss:**

"Being able to enjoy activities longer with my family and not having to take a break every 15 minutes."

**Before:**



**Most surprising insight:** "The surgery really does work.

The amount of courage and energy I got was extraordinary."

**Comment:** "The surgery was a blessing. It saved my life in more ways than one! My wife and I are enjoying life together more and more!"

**After**



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### Nutrition Note

Your body is always trying to protect you. When it comes to calcium, your body will choose to keep your serum (blood) levels steady even if it means stealing it from your bones, as seen in a person with a calcium deficiency. When you have blood tests, the results of your labs unfortunately, do not reflect the density of your bones, although your levels appear normal. Therefore, calcium supplementation is necessary. Calcium absorption is enhanced by Vitamin D, and they work best in an acidic environment. Your stomach provides this acidic environment, but less so after bariatric surgery. When you combine this fact with lower dietary calcium intake, whether from intolerance to dairy, choosing not to drink your milk, and after surgery, because you cannot eat as much, the result is bone loss (bone resorption).

**Here are the most current recommendations.** Choose a brand that contains calcium CITRATE and Vitamin D (Citracal®). In a low acid environment (your stomach after surgery), absorption of calcium CARBONATE (Viactiv®, Caltrate®), was approximately 25% less than with a form of calcium CITRATE. Start with a chewable form right after surgery, and progress to pill

form as tolerated. If you prefer, you may continue chewables. Small pills also work, but they are usually 400mg per 2 pills. Continue to divide your dosage. 400mg should be taken 3 times per day; 500-600mg should be taken 2 times per day. Space evenly throughout the day for maximum absorption.

Remember to keep your calcium separated from your iron, and for those that experience stomach upset from calcium, separate from your multivitamin by at least 2 hours as well. And of course, it is still important to include calcium rich foods in your diet. Low fat milk and dairy products (cottage cheese, yogurt, low fat cheeses) and dark green leafy vegetables are good sources. Losing weight definitely helps in lowering your risk of certain conditions associated with obesity, but you do not want to risk your bone health in exchange. Compliance with your supplementation and staying committed to the lifestyle changes you are making, offers you the protection you need. Weight bearing exercise, moderate sun exposure, cessation of smoking, and limiting your intake of alcohol and caffeine are additional means of keeping your bones healthy.

Note: [bariatricadvantage.com](http://bariatricadvantage.com) is a great website that offers all

recommended supplements in chewable form. Hopefully, by summer's end we will have a link to our website that will make it easier for you to order.

If you would like to know more, call Cindy @412-235-5907. It's always helpful if you can bring in food labels to your visit if you are confused about the nutrition facts panel.

### Post-op Group

Susan Hawkins, an associate of Dr. Tom Petrone, will be leading the next post-op support group for up to 12 people who have already had surgery. It is scheduled for **Thursday, August 21, 2008 from 6-8pm pm** at West Penn Hospital in the Karen Jones room, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, North Tower. Please contact Karen Tissue 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.

### Psychology Corner

Linnea McQuiston is starting an educational/support group for patients **before surgery.**

**"It's not just about food..."**

- Where – West Penn Hospital, Liberty or Allegheny room, 1<sup>st</sup> floor near cafeteria
- When - Monday evenings 6:30-8:00. Participants will

be asked to attend 3 consecutive meetings, which run on the first, second and fourth Monday of the month.

- Price - \$20.00 per session, some insurances taken, co-pay not to exceed \$20.00. Sliding scale can be provided.
- To register Contact Karen Tissue at 412-235-5902.

The tentative dates for the sessions of this group are:

\*Sept\* \* 8, 22, 29

\*Nov.\* - 3, 10, 24

### E-Newsletter

We are making an attempt to get the newsletters out more efficiently and cost effectively. We offer this newsletter via email. If you are receiving this newsletter in paper form and have an email account, please inform us of your email address by emailing [ktissue@wpahs.org](mailto:ktissue@wpahs.org) or calling 412-235-5902. If you prefer to be removed from this mailing, please notify us as well.

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