

The Bariatric Bulletin of the West Penn Bariatric Surgery Center

February 2007

West Penn Campus: 4727 Friendship Avenue, Suite 140 ♦ Pittsburgh, PA 15224 ♦ Phone: 412-235-5900 ♦ Fax: 412-235-5901
Forbes Campus: POB1, Suite 304, 2566 Haymaker Road ♦ Monroeville, PA 15146 ♦ Phone: 412-457-0084 ♦ Fax: 412-457-0050

www.bariatricsurgerypittsburgh.com

The Staff

Surgeons:

Daniel J. Gagné, M.D.
Pavlos Papasavas, M.D.
Jorge Urbandt, M.D.

Clinical Coordinators:

Julie Maurer, PA-C
Kathleen Cenci, RN

Physician Assistants:

Nicole Hayden, PA-C
Erin Madden, PA-C
Jaime O'Neil, PA-C

Dietitians:

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

Psychologists:

Thomas Petrone, Ed.D.
Maura Krushinski, Ed.D.

Insurance Specialist:

Debra Crusan

Medical Assistants:

Lisa Szramowski, MA

Secretaries:

Lorraine Heagy
Cathy Phillips
Connie Titmus
Mary Bellisario

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Support Group

The next support group will be on **Monday, February 19, 2007** in the Wintergarden

Conference Center at West Penn Hospital (1st floor, across from the cafeteria) at **6:30 pm**. This month will be patient stories. A few post-op patients will be sharing their experiences. 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

Susan Hawkins, an associate of 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, February 15, 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.

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.

Patient Feature

Name: Carol N.

Date of Surgery: 11-2-05

Pounds lost: 200

Best thing about weight loss:

"The ability to get around when I want, where I want, and how I want. I used to walk with a cane, and this year, I went tubing at Seven Springs."

Before



After



Most surprising insight: "2 fold – I'm freezing all the time now; and realizing how differently people treat you when you are 200 pounds lighter. I now speak up if I see someone treating anyone overweight differently, because that other person was me."

Comment: "In January 2005, I existed in life. In February 2007, I'm living life. I'm going

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places and doing things that I would have never thought of doing before.”

Nutrition Note

There is no nutrition note for this month, because Megan, our dietitian, delivered a healthy little baby on January 18. Isaac Keith weighed 6 lbs, 13 ounces. Mom and baby are doing well. Congratulations Megan and Keith!



Also, welcome Cindy Cotters, RD, LDN. She is the dietitian that will be covering for Megan while she is off for maternity leave. Welcome Cindy!

Tips from Dr. Tom

Many of our patients have reported that their bariatric surgery has been, “a real family affair.” They describe the ways that they are not the only ones affected by their pre and postoperative surgery experience. Although they are the ones having the procedure, all of the members of the family feel the impact of the changes.

In our preoperative psychological exam and in the post-operative support group, we ask patients to talk about what the surgery has meant in

various areas of their lives, (social, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, physical). Family members experience change in these areas, too. For example, at any family socials that include eating together, from dinner at home to larger family gatherings, our patients tell us that some family members really pay attention to what and how they are eating. For some, this is a supportive experience, while others feel that the attention makes them uncomfortable.

They describe a range of feelings from loved and cared for to feeling pressured to perform. They describe a range of thoughts from confusion to being very clear minded about their choices of what to eat, who to eat with and how to handle the pressure.

In the end, the patients and their families that navigate the changes best are those who follow these guidelines. 1) **Talk** about your experience and feelings together. Keep an open dialogue about what helps and what makes you feel uncomfortable, especially at family social events. 2) **Trust** yourself and each other to say and do what is in all of your best interests. Families are often our best source of support. 3) **Feel**. Pay attention to your feelings and share them. Do not assume that your family members

know what you are thinking or feeling about the surgery. Letting family members in on how you are all feelings is one of the main ingredients to a successful surgery experience. Finally, if you find that you or your family members are having a difficult time following these guidelines and any if any of you are struggling, please call Dr. Petrone or attend one of our post-op support groups for help.

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.