

The Bariatric Bulletin of the West Penn Bariatric Surgery Center

March 2007

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Support Group

The next support group will be on **Monday, March 19, 2007** in the Wintergarden Conference Center at West Penn Hospital (1st floor, across from the cafeteria) at **6:30 pm**. The speaker will be psychologist, Dr. Tom Petrone. 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, March 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: Susan C.

Date of Surgery: 3-2-06

Pounds lost: 88

Best thing about weight loss:

"I am able to move – climb stairs, run, work much harder than before. Before my surgery, I had a difficult time doing anything, and now everything is just so much easier for me."

Most surprising insight: "I didn't expect to lose that much weight, but I did! The weight loss was much more than I expected."

Comment: "Dr. Gagne and his entire staff are simply fabulous people and great to work with. I would not hesitate to recommend gastric bypass surgery to anyone who is overweight and has

had difficulty losing weight and keeping it off."

Before



After



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Nutrition Note

Megan is still off on maternity leave, so instead of a nutrition note, we are including a poem written by one of our pre-op patients.

"I Want to See Me"

When I look into a mirror,
you know what I see –
A stranger looks back at me.
I've known her forever, but I
know she's not me.
My real self is trapped in this
shell everyone can see.
I scream for help, but no one
hears me. No one sees my
pain. No one hears my cry.
All my life most people have
only added to this lonely
misery. Every negative thing
has been thrown my way.
What was said still rings true
today. People treat me like
they said they'd do. I still can
hear the unkind words said to
me. They laugh at my misery.
I need/want to feel better
about that I see...
One day when I look into the
mirror, I want to see me – the
real me.

-by Ann M. Hooks

Tips from Dr. Tom

A February 1, 2007 article in MedicineNet.com by Steven Reinberg, a Health Day News reporter, described a condition reported by many of our patients; binge eating.

Reinberg states, "Binge eating tops the list of eating disorders affecting Americans, with the first-ever national survey on eating disorders finding it much more prevalent than either anorexia or bulimia... Binge eating -- a condition where people undergo frequent, uncontrolled eating binges without purging -- affects 3.5 percent of women and 2 percent of men during their lifetime. The condition is strongly linked to obesity." Based on patient reports and because the majority of our patients are diagnosed with obesity or morbid obesity that we can assume that a higher number of our patients are affected by binge eating than in the general population.

Dr. Ellen Rome, head of the section on adolescent medicine at the Cleveland Clinic, states, "Binge eating is closely tied in with the U.S. obesity epidemic. We see any form of disorder eating as a maladaptive coping strategy." She further states, "Eighty percent of obesity is genetic. So, genetics loads the gun. And the prevalence of binge eating goes hand-in-hand with obesity as one contributing factor. Many people use binge eating to fill up an empty space."

Many individuals overeat at times and many frequently

feel that they have eaten more than they should have or wanted to. How do we know if overeating rises to the level of a disorder? One way to judge is to assess the frequency, intensity and duration of the behavior. In other words, if the overeating is a pattern of behavior that has negative effects on day-to-day living, consider it more of a problem that you may need professional help to resolve.

Review the checklist below to see if you have any of the behaviors or feelings that are most often associated with binge eating and other eating problems:

- Feeling your eating is out of control
- Eating what most people would think is an unusually large amount of food
- Eating much more quickly than usual during binge episodes
- Eating until so full you are uncomfortable
- Eating large amounts of food, even when you are not really hungry
- Eating alone because you are embarrassed about the amount of food you eat
- Feeling disgusted, depressed, or guilty after overeating.

If you checked more than three of the above and you are experiencing negative effects in your daily routines as a result of those behaviors it is time to consult with Dr. Petrone or one of the other staff at the Bariatric Surgery Center for guidance and support.

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.