



Y^{B a r i a t r i c s} Weight?

June, 2006

Surgery didn't stop this mom from nursing or having more children

By Shawn

Catholic Health Initiatives

St. Joseph's Area Health Services

The mission of the Y Weight gastric bypass support group is to provide a supportive learning environment for pre- and post-surgical patients and their families and friends. We exist to help, with kindness and compassion, those who have completed or are contemplating gastric bypass surgery (GBPS).

Knowing that GBPS is a life-changing operation, Y Weight promotes lifestyle changes which enhance the holistic health of its members. Through meetings where education, affirmation, inspiration and socialization occur, the following personal growth tools are provided:

- ▶ Open forum discussion
- ▶ Supportive relationships
- ▶ Special guest lectures
- ▶ Success celebrations
- ▶ Small group discussion



St. Joseph's Area Health Services
600 Pleasant Ave.
Park Rapids, MN 56470

After a lifetime of obesity, I underwent gastric bypass (July, 2003). The decision to have this life-changing surgery was reinforced by my wanting to see my then 16-month-old and 3-month-old sons have a mom they could race and play with. I wanted to be an active mom, loving wife, and to have another child.

Dr. Dan Smith and his staff were very supportive of my decision to continue nursing my second son post-surgery. We investigated medicines and consulted others concerning this uncharted territory. Baby and I never missed a beat.

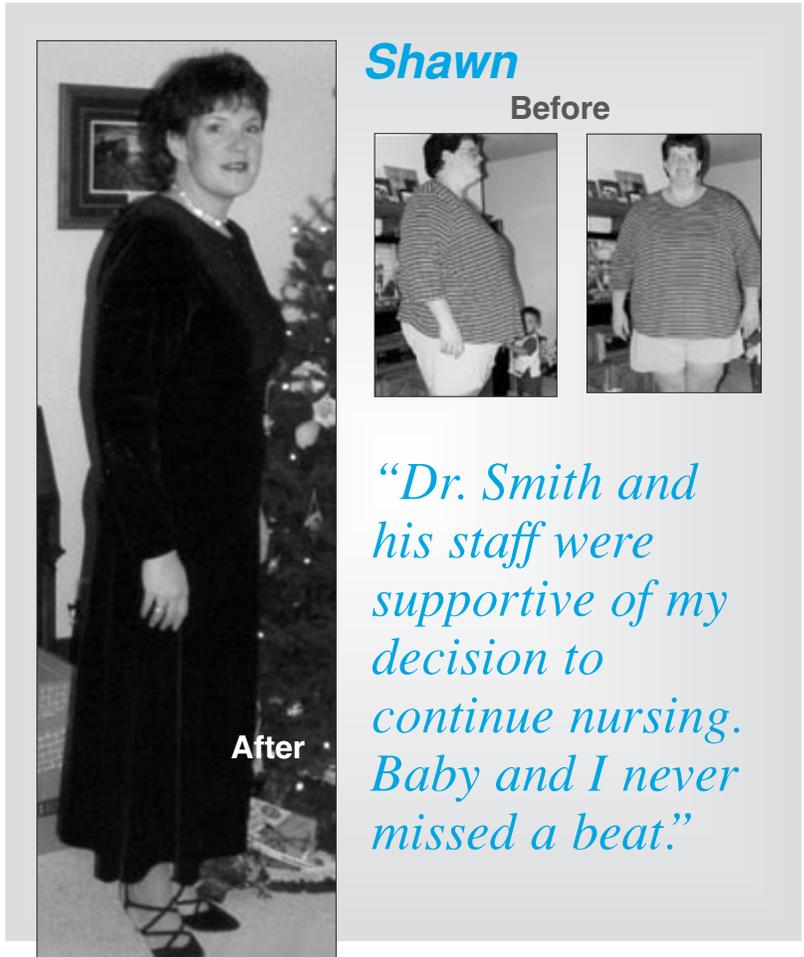
In September (2003) I had a setback and was readmitted to the hospital with what I thought was the flu. St. Joseph's staff was quick to perform bowel obstruction surgery. Now my seven laproscopic scars had a zipper incision with which to compete. The following June brought on hernia repair and pannus removal. My mid-section is now home to an anchor scar from hip to hip. I wear my scars proudly in my bikini (even without a belly button).

A bikini?

You bet! After three surgeries and losing 150 pounds, I weigh less at age 36 than I did at age

12. The bikini doesn't cover some of the extra skin, but I've come too far and am proud of all that I've accomplished.

My husband and I were excited to find ourselves pregnant again in 2005. This time morbid obesity and gestational diabetes didn't complicate matters. I loved wearing regular-sized maternity clothes, and my baby belly was beautiful. Our third son entered the world March 3, 2006 at 9 pounds, 15 ounces. It was a



Shawn

Before

After

“Dr. Smith and his staff were supportive of my decision to continue nursing. Baby and I never missed a beat.”

See 3





Back on Track

The next six-week Back on Track session is scheduled for Thursday evenings, 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., Oct. 5 through Nov. 9.

The group will meet in the Basement Conference Room at St. Joseph's Area Health Services. Please note that the class size is limited to 12 participants, so register early by calling Ilene Maples, RN, at 218-237-5447.

Online support

If you are interested in participating in a program that will help you get back on track with your weight loss but traveling to Park Rapids is prohibitive, there are online programs available in which you can participate.

They are:
www.BackOnTrackWithBarbara.com facilitated by Barbara Thompson, author of *Weight Loss Surgery: Finding the Thin Person Hiding Inside You* and *Back on Track-Kick Start Program* at www.bariatricsupport-center.com, facilitated by Colleen Cook, author of *The Success Habits of Weight-Loss Surgery Patients*.

With help I found my way back

Throughout my life, there's been one passion which has given me pleasure. Throughout my childhood, adolescence, early married years, motherhood, and now golden years, riding and loving horses has give me something for which to live no matter what the circumstances.

When I weighed 300 pounds, riding horses and teaching horsemanship was a real challenge. It was with the hope that I could extend my years with my "joy" that I even considered weight loss surgery. I have never regretted having the surgery; I have enjoyed five more years of riding with good horses and good friends.

Yet, I digress. Everyone has their own particular passion which motivates them to pursue weight loss surgery. Sure, there is the rapid weight loss and incredible size changes, but then for some of us there is an eventual subtle weight gain.

Shame is the word I have used to describe my feelings as I saw the scale creep up twenty-plus pounds. How could I fail again? How could I destroy my success? How could I face all those skeptics? I was miserable and didn't know where to turn or what to do.

Then I saw the "Back on Track" announcement in the last newsletter. I called immediately and signed up.

From
the
Outside
In

By
Cheryl Mickunas



Since then I have had some serious health problems, and I was not able to attend all of the meetings. However, encouragement and community with others in the same "saddle" gave me the impetus to take hold of the reins and set that horse in the right direction.

What a wonderful, practical program which addresses the needs of all who struggle with some weight gain. What wonderful friends to carry half of our load.

I discovered once again that I am not alone. In addition to excellent materials to work through each week, there is a qualified instructor to help with questions and concerns. Also (and this helped me a lot), we had a buddy system so I could call, e-mail, or write whenever I needed an encouraging word.

You need to know you are not alone; you need not hang your head in shame. We are still winners, and we just have to take back that success to find peace again. This program can help. A new class begins this fall. Sign up!

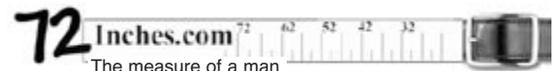
Speaker to inspire others at Walk From Obesity

Mark your calendars for the upcoming Walk From Obesity as hosted by St. Joseph's Area Health Services and Dakota Clinic from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 30. The event, sponsored by the American Society for Bariatric Surgery, raises public awareness for obesity and additionally serves as a fundraiser for the cause.

Plan to participate in the walk and attend the 2nd Annual Patient Reunion and Success Walk with video presentation. This year's Walk From Obesity will be held at Park Rapids Area Century School.

Keynote speaker will be Bo McCoy. He uses humor and candor to tell his inspirational story which took him from a top weight of 626 pounds to where he is today.

McCoy lived as an obese person for 33 years. "All I wanted was to feel normal," he



Bo McCoy at age 34 weighed 626 pounds. He will be sharing his personal journey at the Walk From Obesity to be held on Sept. 30 at Century School.

says. "My life was full of physical pain, emotional torment, and isolation."

[See back](#)



Question: I would like to have children after my gastric bypass, what are your recommendations?

Answer: We recommend not having children until your weight loss after surgery has slowed. This is typically about 18 months after surgery.

Before getting pregnant, we like you to change your vitamin regimen to include more iron, folate, and calcium. You should be seen by our surgery program physician as well as a dietitian



By Leah Walters,
RD, LD, CDE

Can I have babies after surgery?

prior to getting pregnant.

We have had several patients with healthy pregnancies. While breastfeeding your new baby, we recommend continuing your pregnancy vitamin regimen and getting extra fluids.

'It is wonderful to see my son, Connor, filling out instead of me'

Testimony / from cover

joyous nine, uncomplicated months.

The doctors monitored me closely, and I did gain 40 pounds, but have lost 30 pounds since delivery and am working on the last 25 pounds until I reach my goal weight.

I am successfully nursing again. It is wonderful to see my son, Connor, filling out instead of me.

I'm coming up on the third anniversary of my gastric bypass surgery.

I have a wonderfully supportive husband, three beautiful sons and a new outlook on life.

I race and chase after my kids and know that I am a healthy role model for them.

There are too many bikini seasons left in my life to miss.

Nutrition Nugget

Chicken Parmigiana

This dish is great served on whole wheat angel hair pasta. The chicken is moist and easy to eat once you discover the secret of tenderizing the cutlets with an aluminum meat mallet. (4 oz. portion: Calories 207, fat 9 grams, protein 25 grams)

- 1 large egg, beaten
- 4 boneless chicken breast halves
- 1 cup Italian flavored bread crumbs
- 1/4 c. olive oil
- 2 cups prepared Italian pasta sauce
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1/2 c. grated parmesan

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place bread crumbs in a shallow dish or bowl. Place each chicken piece between two plastic sandwich bags and pound to an even 1/2-inch thickness. Dip cutlet into egg, then lightly coat with bread crumbs. Heat olive oil in a large non-stick skillet over medium-high heat and sauté chicken until lightly browned on both sides (about 2 minutes per side).

Transfer to shallow baking dish. Top each chicken cutlet with sauce, and sprinkle with mozzarella and parmesan cheese. Bake until cheese has melted and chicken is cooked through (about 15 minutes).

We appreciate your input

Y Weight invites you to submit articles, questions, stories, your personal profile or any information you feel would benefit other gastric patients, to Arlysh Hess, social worker, at 218-237-5588. Address correspondence to her at St. Joseph's Area Health Services, 600 Pleasant Ave., Park Rapids, MN 56470. Her e-mail address is arlyshess@catholichealth.net

If you choose to no longer receive this newsletter, please call 218-237-5711 or 1-800-566-3311 ext. 588 and ask to have your name removed from the mailing list. Thank you.



The Center for Weight Management

A service of St. Joseph's Area Health Services
600 Pleasant Avenue Park Rapids, MN 56470
Phone: (218) 732-3311 Fax: (218) 732-1368



For more information about bariatric services call

The Center for Weight Management

at 1-800-566-3311 or 218-237-5757.

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Y Weight?

B a r i a t r i c s

Y Weight Support Group

The following is a schedule for the summer months. Meetings are held at 4:30 p.m. in SJAHs basement conference room on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month.

- ▶ **June 8:** "How to Eat Out" / small group discussion
- ▶ **June 27:** Special guest, Rachel Mueller, LADC, to speak on "Addictions and Addictive Behaviors"
- ▶ **July 13:** "Savvy Support" / small group discussion
- ▶ **July 27:** Special guest: Dr. Evelyn Erickson, Midsota Plastic Surgeons, P.A., St. Cloud to speak on "Plastic Surgery After Weight Loss Surgery"
- ▶ **Aug. 10:** Lesson: "Measuring Your Progress" / small group discussion
- ▶ **Aug. 24:** Special guest: Sandy Jones, PA, Dakota Clinic to talk on "Vitamin Review"

Walk From Obesity to be held Sept. 30

Testimony / from 2

The excess weight had taken control of McCoy's body. It was through "faith, friendship, and medical assistance" that he found the strength to tackle obstacles in his life.

McCoy will share how he overcame life-controlling problems associated with morbid obesity.

Today, at age 36, he lives in Ohio and tells his story as an inspiration to others.

McCoy was overweight by the time he was 5-years-old.

He was taunted as the "fat kid" at school to which he responded with tears and anger. At age 12 he weighed more than 200 pounds.

His teen years were a nightmare.

McCoy graduated from high school at 350 pounds and graduated from college at 450. During his marriage, his weight climbed to 626 pounds which translates to a BMI of 101.5.

He says open bypass surgery turned his life and attitudes around.

"My life has gotten as close to normal as a 285-pound man can expect," he adds.

Today he is the events manager at ObesityHelp.com.

Anyone interested in registering for the event can call 218-237-5757, ext. 3.