



# Y B a r i a t r i c s Weight?

August, 2004

A support group newsletter for gastric bypass patients

† 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, inspirational 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

On the Web:  
[www.sjahs.org](http://www.sjahs.org)

## I didn't think I was *that* heavy

By Jennie

My name is Jennie, and I had gastric bypass surgery July 21, 2003.

Making the decision to have the surgery was a long and hard one for me.

At the beginning of 2003, Sandy Jones, PA, and Dr. Burton Haugen suggested I consider having surgery which was a little upsetting.

You know the self-denial way of thinking: "I'm not that heavy!"

They had recommended the surgery because I had been in the hospital for a week with blood clots in my left leg. I'd had similar blood clots before.

Also that previous year, Dr. Smith had performed surgery on my right leg for an open sore which didn't heal for more than a year.

Needless to say, I have really rotten circulation in my legs. I was on Coumadin and Lasix for swelling and potassium because of the Lasix.

Dr. Haugen had Dr. Smith's nurse send me the book, "Weight Loss Surgery: Finding the Thin Person Hiding Inside You," by Barbara Thompson, which I read right away.

Then I read a few other articles on the surgery and saw a television show (somewhat negative) on gastric bypass.

Frankly, I was scared to death.

But I talked to Dr. Haugen again, and he wrote a letter to my insurance company.



**Jennie**  
*"Best of all, I'm the same size as my 16-year-old daughter."*



Before

We made an appointment to see Sandy and Dr. Smith.

The appointment turned out to be the class we had with Leah Walters (dietitian) and Arlys Hess (social worker) and everyone else.

The next thing I knew, I was scheduled for surgery on the 21st.

Wow, everything was happening so fast.

My husband said I didn't have to go through with it if I didn't want to, but he also thought it would be a really good idea. He would stand behind me 100 percent.

I said, as long as I was scheduled, I might as well go for it.

I woke up petrified the morning of my surgery. My husband took my before pictures, and we left for the hospital.

Everything went just fine, however I wound up being in the hospital for eight days compared to everyone else at three or

See 3



## Habits

At the July 8 meeting, a short, 15-minute Success Habits lesson on personal accountability was taught.

This was the start of our brief lessons that will be held during the first meeting of each month. Lessons planned for the rest of 2004 are as follows:

▶ **Aug. 12** - Portion Control: "I understand the importance of satiety and listen to my body's signals."

▶ **Sept. 9** - Nutrition: "I make good healthy food choices each day."

▶ **Oct. 14** - Fluid Intake: "I drink the right amount of the right beverages each day."

▶ **Nov. 11**: Regular Exercise: "I have adopted the habit of exercise as part of my lifestyle."

▶ **Dec. 9**: Vitamins & Supplements: "I take good quality vitamins each day to ensure my good health."

Your attendance and participation is greatly encouraged!!

## Don't give up, dig in

Last fall I finally reached the 100-plus pound weight loss since my bariatric surgery two years ago.

Elation and celebration! You can imagine my chagrin when, over the winter, I put on about twenty pounds.

Pre-surgery, this would have triggered a cascading spiral downward to despair and defeat resulting in additional weight gain.

Not this time. I have a tool; I don't have to give up. By returning to the basics, I could conquer even this.

Then I read an article in "Beyond Change" about the dilemma of weight gain around the two year post-surgery period.

### From the Outside In



By Cheryl Mickunas

Jacquelyn Smiertka, the editor, asks that anyone who has experienced this, write her with details at Beyond Change, 43494 Woodward Ave., Suite 108, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302. They will publish the results of the survey. (I will share them with you in the future.)

Teri Kai Holtzclaw, Ph.D., says in the June 2004 Beyond Change, "To continue to succeed and maintain your weight loss, remember to keep returning to the basics. To really

grow as a person is to accept this challenge: To live publicly; to act imperfectly; to laugh incessantly; and to love unconditionally."

Incorporate into these the four rules to success: exercise, eat proteins, drink lots of water and don't graze and we can experience acceptance of ourselves and success in our journey.

I am reminded of a roped steer that digs in all four hooves and never gives up, but must be dragged every step into submission. Let's not give up, but dig in! Victory is ours!

## Inner Strength

from Beyond Change, June 2004

- If you can start the day without caffeine or pep pills,
- If you can be cheerful, ignoring aches and pains,
- If you can resist complaining and boring people with your troubles,
- If you can eat the same food everyday and be grateful for it,
- If you can understand when loved ones are too busy to give you the time of day,
- If you can overlook when people take things out on you when, through no fault of yours, something goes wrong;
- If you can take criticism and blame without resentment,
- If you can face the world without lies and deceit,
- If you can conquer tension without medical help,
- If you can relax without liquor,
- If you can sleep without the aid of drugs,
- If you can do all these things,
- Then you are probably the family dog!

*"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."*

*Martin Luther King*



### Testimony / from cover

four days.

I couldn't keep anything down including water.

A dilatation was performed because all that was getting through was a puff of air. Dr. Smith said I would probably have to have another one which he performed three weeks later. Since then everything has been just great.

When I weighed myself this year, exactly one year after the surgery, I was down 96 pounds. I had also lost 32 and a half pounds prior to surgery. That's a total 128 and a half pounds lost so far. I only have eight more pounds to go to get to the goal Sandy set for me.

It totally amazes me the simple things I can do now which I couldn't do before - like cross my legs, sit in a chair with room on both sides of me, and get up with no effort at all.

I walk or do the stairs without being out of breath. My legs and feet don't hurt anymore, and my back doesn't hurt as it did in the past.

I'm off all of my pills except for my vitamins, of course.

Best of all, I'm the same size as my 16-year-old daughter.

Would I do it again? Yes, I guess I would.

## Nutrition Nugget

Missing pizza? Try this!

Santa Fe Pizza

- 1 10-inch corn tortilla or pita bread
- 2 tablespoons yellow cornmeal
- 1 meat-free, soy-based burger or 4 oz. lean hamburger
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 cup taco sauce
- 3 tablespoons fresh cilantro
- 1/2 cup canned black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/4 cup diced green chili peppers
- 4 ounces shredded mozzarella cheese

Spray pizza pan with non-stick cooking spray, then dust the pan with cornmeal. Fry soy-based burger in a non-stick skillet over low heat, chopping the burger into bits with a spatula. Stir in cumin. Spread taco sauce over pizza crust and sprinkle with warm burger and remaining toppings. Bake at 400 degrees for 15 minutes or until cheese is bubbly and begins to brown. Cut into 6 slices.

Calories per slice: 200  
 Protein: 15 grams  
 Fat: 4 grams  
 Carbohydrate: 37 grams  
 Sodium: 590 milligrams  
 Cholesterol: 10 milligrams



*“Now and then it's good to pause in our pursuit of happiness and just be happy.”*

*Guillaume Apollinaire*

## 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 Arlys Hess, social worker, at 218-237-5588. Or write her at St. Joseph's Area Health Services, 600 Pleasant Ave., Park Rapids, MN 56470. Or e-mail: arlyshess@catholichealth.net

† CATHOLIC HEALTH  
INITIATIVES

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*For more information about bariatric services call 218-237-5588.*

If you choose to no longer receive this newsletter, please call 218-237-5711 or 1-800-566-3311 ext. 711 and ask to have your name removed from the mailing list. Thank you.

## St. Joseph's Area Health Services

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# Y Weight?

B a r i a t r i c s

Our Web  
page is one  
click away

Let your  
mouse do  
the walking

[www.sjahs.org](http://www.sjahs.org)

St. Joseph's Area Health Services' bariatric Web page nears completion having undergone a major expansion and facelift.

Very soon anyone interested in finding out more about bariatric services at St. Joseph's or to learn more about our surgical weight loss program and staff can click on to: [www.sjahs.org](http://www.sjahs.org)

It's also a place where you can go to share your experiences with others, giving them personal insight on how the Roux en-Y procedure worked for you.

## Group notes

▶ A clothing exchange is being planned for **Aug. 26**. Bring those fall clothes you can no longer make use of and share them with someone who may need them for a period of time.

Please bring items to the group session with you and take home items not given away. Your cooperation in this regard is greatly appreciated.

Recycle! Recycle!  
Recycle!

▶ A support group has been established in the **Cass Lake area**. The group meets at 5:30 p.m. every second Monday of the month at Cass Lake Hospital/Indian Health Service (425 7th St.

NW) in the lower level Dental Building conference room. Contact Person: Jody Dahl (218-766-2676 or 218-335-3245).

▶ As the practice of surgical weight loss continues to develop, the need for post-surgery, follow-up data increases.

If you are interested in **taking part in research** related to bariatric surgery, you are invited to contribute your specific information in an anonymous Surgical Weight Loss Survey endorsed by the American Society of Bariatric Surgeons.

The survey is found at [www.drgaye.com](http://www.drgaye.com).