



# Y <sup>B a r i a t r i c s</sup> Weight?

September, 2005

† 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

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

## The surgery got me exercising again

By Cathy

I have been heavy my whole life. I was always the biggest child in my class in elementary school, even bigger than the boys. In kindergarten, I wore my sister's hand-me-downs. She's five years older than me and some of her clothes didn't even fit.

As an active child with six brothers and a sister, I spent most of my time playing with my brothers and becoming a tomboy. In eighth grade I injured my knee playing football. That was the beginning of hearing those dreaded words from the doctor: "You have to lose weight."

Through the years I've had surgeries on both knees. In July, 2003, I once again was having problems with my knee so I went to see a doctor to get a "third" opinion. This doctor walked in the room and started to tell me about how I was going to have to lose weight before he was going to be able to help me with my knee. He suggested I look into weight loss surgery before he had even looked at any x-rays. I went home so mad, but later decided maybe he was right. In March, 2004, I had weight loss surgery.

I started going to the Y Weight support group prior to surgery. The people there were wonderful. I was so nervous about having the surgery. The support I got there was wonderful before and after. I still attend these meetings. I feel no matter how far out from surgery, you still can learn from others.

After surgery I immediately started to have some slight problems. The first couple of months were awful. I wondered what I had done. I needed a dilatation at five weeks out and another at 11 weeks out, but have been fine since.

I started walking before surgery and have kept that up. That June I bought a bike and rode for the first time in over 20 years. At first it was all I could do to ride a mile or two. Each day I tried to go a little farther. I had to set my goals in little segments because my body was out of shape, and I needed to take it slowly. By August I could ride about 15 miles. By the end of the biking season I made a 26-mile trek. What an achievement for me! That first summer I rode a total of about 500 miles.



After



Before

**Cathy**

*"Growing up obese was not easy. The emotional scars left on an obese child can never be measured."*

Yes, the surgery has been great at getting me back into exercise. I still have problems with my knees and feet. I have arthritis, but without the surgery the added weight would have been more apt to increase the progression of the arthritis. I am still looking to having knee surgery, but the weight loss should improve my recovery time. I no longer take any blood pressure medicine, and my fibromyalgia is better with the increased exercise.

Recently, I was honored by TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) with a second place at state for my weight loss from the time of my surgery through December, 2004. I lost 107.25 pounds in that time. I credit this to the surgery and the exercise that I found to be so important. I've lost approximately 120 pounds since I decided to have the surgery, and I weigh about what I did in the fifth grade.

Growing up obese was not easy, the emotional scars left on an obese child can never be measured. Kids and adults can be so cruel. Growing up I heard a lot of remarks that should never have been said, but as a child you find ways to cope. Even as adults we still use a lot of those same coping mechanisms to deal with the prejudice of being overweight. That's one reason I'm walking in the Walk from Obesity, Sept. 24 at the Park Rapids Area High School. The money raised will go to the

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## Group Notes

► Following is the Y Weight Support Group schedule for the remainder of 2005:

**September 8:** Lesson - "The Power of Protein" / Support Group Evaluation

**September 22:** Guest Speaker - Dr. Joel Kirchner, "The Impact of Bariatric Surgery on Relationships"

**October 13:** Lesson - "The Effects of Alcohol"

**October 27:** Guest Speaker - Representative from St. Joseph's Rehab. Department, "Safe Rehabilitation for the Bariatric Patient"

**November 10:** Lesson - "Aerobic and Strength Strengthening"

**December 8:** Lesson - "The Facts About Calcium" / Holiday Surprise!

# You won't want to miss the ASBS 'Walk From Obesity' event Sept. 24

It's more than just a walk. The "Walk From Obesity" event sponsored by the American Society for Bariatric Surgery (ASBS) on Saturday, Sept. 24, is a chance to educate and motivate the public about the obesity epidemic and benefit its cause.

From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. St. Joseph's Area Health Services and Dakota Clinic of Park Rapids will host the event along with 70 cities from across the nation at the Park Rapids Area High School and track (the walk will be held in the gym in case of rain/cold). Bariatric surgery patients, their families and the public are invited to participate in activities geared for all ages.

The event kicks off at 10 a.m. with words from motivational speaker, Larry L. Peterson. Peterson lost more than 200 pounds and continues to battle weight management.

Then it's time to strap on your walking



shoes and get moving for the "Walk From Obesity" portion of the festivities. Vendors and informational booths will be on hand and live music will entertain walkers. There will be fun activities for children, and healthy foods available as well.

A reunion of bariatric patients and a Success Walk featuring bariatric surgery patients will follow at 1 p.m. (See story and sign-up sheet below.)

The ASBS "Walk From Obesity" hopes to increase awareness of the life-threatening implications of obesity and raise funds for research into the causes, prevention, and advanced treatments of the disease.

To participate in the walk, or to learn more about weight management programs, call Leah Walters at (218)237-5705 or contact her at leahwalters@catholichealth.net

## Reunion/Success Walk to be held in conjunction with ASBS event

In conjunction with the first annual "Walk From Obesity," St. Joseph's Area Health Services invites post-surgery weight loss patients and their guests to a reunion for all individuals who have had weight loss surgery at St Joseph's. The event will be held from 1 to 2 p.m. in the Park Rapids Senior High School Auditorium. Reunion events include a video presentation and Success Walk, drawings for door prizes, and the presentation of Certificates of Success.

The Success Walk and video presentation will feature post-surgery patients who would like to celebrate their weight loss success with the group. Participation is voluntary and individuals attending the reunion are under no obligation to participate in the Success Walk.

Those wanting to participate in the Success Walk are asked to complete the following registration form and send a pre-surgery picture to Arlys Hess, St. Joseph's Area Health Services, 600 Pleasant Ave., Park Rapids, MN 56470, or e-mail the information to arlyshess@catholichealth.net

By sending a picture, participants are consenting to walk across the auditorium stage while the information on the registration form is being read to the audience, and the "before-surgery" picture is being shown on a large video screen. If participants would like to take part in the Success Walk but do not

have a "before" picture to share, they are welcome to hold or wear "before" clothing as they take their Success Walk on the auditorium stage. Again, participation is voluntary.

### Success Walk registration form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_

I will be taking part in the Success Walk.

My picture is enclosed.

My picture has been e-mailed.

I will be holding or modeling "before" clothing.

I will be walking across the stage without a picture or any props.

Surgery Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Pounds Lost (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Significant benefit of surgery: \_\_\_\_\_



## I think I can, I think I can...

Many of you are probably familiar with the story about the little engine that struggled to make it over the top of a mountain while chanting, "I think I can." Well, that story doesn't fall far from the tree for those of us struggling to achieve or maintain weight loss.

I have come to the conclusion that living in the poverty belt of central Minnesota offers some unique aspects to that struggle.

Recently we visited my daughter in the Colorado Rockies where she works as a wrangler at a guest ranch. We spent a week being catered to, both in our activities and our cuisine. The food was phenomenal, each meal surpassing the one before. Every morning we could choose from among a myriad of fresh berries and homemade breakfast treats. Lunches included steak or chicken fajitas served on the mountainside after riding up on horseback. Suppers ranged from mahimahi to prime rib with scrumptious side dishes. (Not to mention desserts like pecan cheese cake.)

Believe it or not, I returned to my home in Sebeka seven pounds lighter!

Why?

When provided with healthy choices, we will jump at the chance to choose to eat them.

What is the Midwest known for?

### From the Outside In

By  
Cheryl Mickunas



Hot dishes and Jell-O. I've spent the past 30 years trying to make the money stretch to feed my family. Often that means choosing those foods that satisfy the "need" rather than the "want."

We prepare cheap foods like macaroni and cheese rather than swordfish steaks because we know that once the grocery fund is gone we must wait until the next day to refurbish the account. We garden, raise our own beef and chickens and provide for our families but never get to the point of a healthy food budget. How do we justify eating fish when the family is eating tomato soup and crackers?

I don't have the answers; I just know that in facing this giant, we will find skills that will help us. The thrill of losing seven pounds has motivated me to keep trying once again to keep climbing the mountain to success just like that little engine who thought he could. Don't ever give up trying to be a healthier and happier you. Dig in and keep trying.

I know you can, I know you can...

## Nutrition Nugget

### Marinated Italian Salad

1 can green beans, drained  
12-15 black olives, sliced  
4 oz. mozzarella cheese, cubed  
1 onion, sliced  
1 small package mushrooms, sliced  
2-3 oz. turkey pepperoni slices  
Head of lettuce, torn into pieces

#### Dressing:

3/4 cup vinegar, 1 tsp. salt, 1/4 cup oil  
1/4 cup water, 1 tsp. Italian seasoning,  
Splenda to taste (~1 Tbsp.)

Combine dressing ingredients and marinate green beans and olives overnight in dressing. Just before serving, add rest of ingredients to dressing mixture and toss.

## Let's celebrate our successes

Testimony / from cover

ASBS Foundation for education, research and treatment of obesity. Wouldn't it be great if no other child would have to grow up with the prejudice of being obese like we had to?

Please also join me at the reunion of surgical patients. Many of us met before surgery at our classes or at support group meetings but haven't seen each other since. This will be a great time to catch up and celebrate others' success because of this surgery.

## 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. 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

CATHOLIC HEALTH  
INITIATIVES

### 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 our **Center for Weight Management**  
at 1-800-566-3311 or 218-237-5757.

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.

## St. Joseph's Area Health Services

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## Weight?

B a r r i a t r i c s

### Group Notes

▶ Beginning on October 13, 2005, a six-session support group entitled, "Back on Track," will get underway for post-surgery patients who are at least 18 months post-surgery and struggling with weight regain.

The group will meet from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. the second and fourth Thursdays of the month in the Basement Conference Room at St. Joseph's Area Health Services. Cost is \$60 and participants are requested to commit to attending each session.

If interested in participating in this group, please contact Leah Walters at 218-732-3311, ext. 757.

**Question:** Why is water so important?

**Answer:** Water suppresses the appetite naturally and helps the body metabolize stored fat.

Studies have shown that a decrease in water intake will cause fat deposits to increase, while an increase in water intake can actually reduce fat deposits.

Water prevents dehydration. Even slight dehydration can lead to stricture at the junction point of your new pouch and small bowel.

Drinking water helps rid the body of waste. During weight loss, the body has a lot more waste to get rid of -- all the metabolized fat must be shed.

Water also helps relieve constipation. When the body gets too little water, it siphons what it needs from internal sources. The colon is one primary source. Result? Constipation.



By Leah Walters,  
RD, LD, CDE

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Your body needs plenty of water to perform a multitude of functions

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But, when a person drinks enough water, normal bowel function usually returns.

So drink up, but remember to keep your beverages free of "the 3 C's:" caffeine, carbonation, and calories!