

Y Weight?

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Center of Excellence
BARIATRIC SURGERY

Experts back weight-loss surgery for treatment of obese diabetes patients

“Gastric bypass creates hormonal changes immediately after surgery, such that type 2 diabetes is immediately improved, even before there has been any weight loss.”

Dr. Dan Smith,
Surgeon, Center for
Weight Management
Bariatric Medical
Director

The data is in. Weight-loss surgery, in combination with behavioral modifications, can be a “powerful tool” in the treatment of type 2 diabetes for obese patients.

The International Diabetes Federation (IDF) Taskforce on Epidemiology and Prevention said as much in a position statement released recently.

The taskforce substantiates evidence backing bariatric surgery as a cost-effective treatment for type 2 diabetes in obese patients, that it should be considered earlier in the treatment of these patients and that prejudices in regard to severe obesity (even those that exist within the healthcare and insurance systems) “should not act as a barrier” to patients receiving “clinically-effective treatment options.”

St. Joseph’s Center for Weight Management surgeons, Dr. Daniel Smith and Dr. Robert Wroblewski, have worked to educate primary care physicians and patients about surgical weight-loss treatment options and the significant effectiveness surgery has in normalizing blood glucose levels in a relatively short time.

This is in addition to a scope of other health benefits including a reduction or reversal in other life-threatening chronic conditions such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, sleep apnea, and more.

“Gastric bypass (the gold standard of weight-loss surgery) creates hormonal changes immediately after surgery,” says Dr. Smith, “such that type 2 diabetes is immediately improved, even before there has been any weight loss. Almost every week we discharge a diabetic patient after

gastric bypass surgery who no longer needs oral medications or insulin to manage their diabetes, even though they are only about three days out from surgery and haven’t lost any weight yet.”

Studies looking at RNY gastric bypass surgeries show the 5-year death rate decreasing “three- to nine-fold” compared to patients not having surgery, he notes.

In his presentations, Dr. Smith cites medical studies that show weight-loss surgeries save lives, improve quality of life for patients, and are cost-effective.

The IDF would like to see priority strategies put in place to ensure accessibility to weight-loss surgery for obese patients with type 2 diabetes who are most likely to benefit.

Leah Walters, St. Joseph’s Center for Weight Management Bariatric Manager, says stereotypes and prevalent bias from society are non-productive in helping patients with life-threatening chronic conditions such as diabetes get the help they need.

While any surgery carries risk, evidence associated with modern weight loss shows surgeries and mortality rates to be relatively low, comparable, in fact, to elective gall stone surgery.

Because St. Joseph’s Center for Weight Management is an American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS) “Center of Excellence,” it is among only those facilities that demonstrate unparalleled commitment to consistently deliver safe, effective, evidence-based care.

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Center of
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We want to hear from you...

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 or e-mail: arlyshess@catholichealth.net

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Eydie builds healthy new relationship with food



Weight-loss surgery changed Eydie Garcelon's life. She now volunteers at St. Joseph's Center for Weight Management and is pursuing a career path in nutrition.

Eydie Garcelon lost her best friend the day she had weight-loss surgery.

The food. The junk food.

Chips, candy, and soda pop which at one time brought her comfort, day or night, without judgment: all gone.

"When I was happy, food was there to help me celebrate. If I was sad and woke up at three in the morning, food was there for me, unconditionally, to fill in any gaps," says Eydie of Park Rapids who lost 170 pounds following weight-loss surgery at St. Joseph's Center for Weight Management.

She has sustained that loss by making behavioral changes, attending support group and nutrition classes, and incorporating exercise into a healthy lifestyle.

When she weighed 323 pounds and suffered from uncontrollable type 2 diabetes, it was evident that food wasn't such a good friend after all.

What's incredible for Eydie was that she had been taking two different types of insulin, four times daily, (in addition to six other medications for other life-threatening conditions) in an attempt to control her diabetes.

Two weeks after her gastric bypass surgery on Dec. 7, 2009, Eydie was off all insulin. By week four after surgery she was off all medications once needed to treat her other life-threatening conditions - high cholesterol and high blood pressure.

She is a model example of why weight-loss surgery, in combination with behavioral

modifications, should be introduced earlier as a treatment option for morbidly obese patients with type 2 diabetes.

The latest position statement from the International Diabetes Federation Taskforce on Epidemiology and Prevention position says as much. (See Page 2.)

Momentum

"I knew surgery was literally my last chance at life and my only way to get some control of the diabetes," she says.

Eydie knew she was sick, really sick.

Anyone who has diabetes or has been tested for diabetes takes an A1c test. Normal results range from 4.8 to 5.9. Eydie's type 2 diabetes number came in above 15. She was told it was "off the charts;" some charts only go as high as 12.

Tears of frustration and fear welled up during an appointment with Dr. Dan Smith, bariatric surgeon, and St. Joseph's Center for Weight Management Bariatric Manager, Leah Walters, RD, LD, CDE, several months prior to her surgery. Eydie worried she wouldn't live long enough to have the procedure.

(Many insurance companies have policy prerequisites requiring patients to get psychiatric evaluations, lose weight prior to surgery, and other stipulations.)

"I was afraid I would die before I could have the surgery," Eydie admits.

She tried every diet possible, some professionally estab-



Prior to her surgery in 2009, Eydie always wore a brilliant smile, even though she was really "crying on the inside."

"I was afraid I would die before I could have the surgery."

Eydie Garcelon,
Diabetes sufferer

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“The pop, candy, and chips were actually poisoning me. The important thing for me now is to avoid those foods completely... to not even take one sip or bite of those foods.”

Eydie,
Surgical weight-loss
patient

Symptoms of diabetes

It is easy to mistake or ignore the symptoms of diabetes because they are usually not severe. If you have any of these symptoms, talk to your doctor:

- Urinating often
- Thirsty all the time
- Hungry all the time
- Tired all the time
- Losing weight for no reason
- Blurry eye sight

SOURCE: MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Eydie, from 3

lished and others of her own making. Walking any distance became brutal without suffering from joint pain and increasing lack of stamina. During the day she would sleep so she could have the energy to care for her children when they came home from school.

“When I quit taking care of myself, the weight came on fast,” she says. “The quicker it came on, the less I was able to do. It was a spiral in the wrong direction.”

Anyone who knows Eydie knows she always has a smile on her face, but Eydie will tell you it was a mask during that time in her life.

“I realize it now,” she admits. “I was crying inside. I hurt. I was sad and very, very down on myself.”

She still wears that same smile, but today it radiates from the inside. “I feel it now.”

Weight-loss surgery was the tool she needed to build enough momentum to turn the downward spiral on its ear.

As the weight came off, Eydie started moving. She lifted one leg five times while laying in bed. Then she lifted her other leg five times. It was baby steps at first, but she never stopped moving.

Trips to the gym, strength training, resistance training and toning are all a part of her exercise regime.

Walking is now her passion. At one time, Eydie had applied for a handicapped accessible permit because the walk from her van to a store was too much for her to bear.

On April 13 she hit her stride with a 4-mile walk. “That’s 12 laps through the

school!” she revealed in the moment.

Friendly foods

Eydie used the opportunity immediately following her surgery to kill her cravings for the junk foods she knew were toxic to her system.

“They are my enemy now,” she says. “The pop, candy, and chips were actually poisoning me. The important thing for me now is to avoid those foods completely... to not even take one sip or bite of those foods.”

She plays by the rules and is rewarded by the results.

Her new motto for life: Nothing tastes as good as healthy feels.

“And I feel fabulous!”

She is healthier physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. She eats proteins, fruits, and veggies and stays away from breads and pasta. She views them as carbohydrates that trigger cravings.

In combination with a new exercise regime, Eydie notices that even her brain works better. With improved memory, there is more clarity in her thinking. She is better equipped to be more organized and juggle her kids’ busy schedules with ease.

She cringed at the thought of having even one chocolate egg last Easter.

“That chocolate egg didn’t do me any good before. I know one egg will lead to two,” she says. “I am taking control over what kinds of food I eat. As the saying goes, I am eating to live, not living to eat.”

Hope

Eydie knows she has to

work to continue to make healthy eating and lifestyle choices for the rest of her life, but doesn’t feel deprived by any means. The opposite, actually, is true.

She is using her experience, motivation, and newfound discoveries to enrich her life by helping others who are struggling or suffering from the complexities of morbid obesity.

As a volunteer in St. Joseph’s Center for Weight Management Bariatric Department, Eydie is available to bariatric patients at any level of their weight-loss journey.

She participates in support groups, nutrition classes, pre-surgical education sessions and is a source of inspiration for others after their surgery. She knows what they are going through.

“There is hope,” she tells others and encourages them to stay focused. She has a pocket-sized photo book of her “before” photos to show them, the ones that weren’t shredded.

Eydie has gone back to school. Her dream is to break into the dietary management medical nutrition field so she can educate and inspire others. According to her blog at purpleminnesota.blogspot.com, she wants to be able to inspire others and share her passion for good nutrition and a healthy lifestyle. She wants to give others a taste of what feeling good is all about.

St. Joseph’s Center for Weight Management in Park Rapids has surgical and non-surgical solutions for bariatric patients. Anyone who would like to learn more about options available can call 218-237-5757.



Weekend in the Pines

We'll be 'Breaking Barriers' at fall retreat Oct. 7&8

The Center for Weight Management's team wants to turn things up a notch.

They are excited about this year's annual retreat, The Weekend in the Pines, because they think it is time to "Break Barriers."

This year expect to come to Osage's Smokey Hills Wilderness Retreat and Conference Center to rejuvenate your spirit and recharge during one of northern Minnesota's most

exquisite fall weekends of the year. And also prepare for a boost of energy and the breaking of barriers with your participation.

The annual Walk From Obesity is held annually in conjunction with the Weekend in the Pines event.

Every year participants help to raise money to support research, education, prevention and treatment of obesity.

This year, as an added twist, besides raising money for a great cause, participants will find themselves in the midst of a geocaching scavenger hunt.

What you get out of the retreat depends on what kind of energy you will be willing to bring to the retreat, as guest speaker, Brandon Johnson, will likely tell you during his motivational session.

Other guest experts will be bringing their A game to make the Weekend in the Pines special for you.

Please watch for brochures and registration forms in the mail or check our website at weightmanagementmn.com as details are made final.

We'll see you in the pines this fall!



Motivational speaker, Brandon Johnson, brings abundant energy and content to his audiences. His goal is to leave them inspired and equipped to make things happen in their lives.

Diabetes, from 2

From January 2000-2011, St. Joseph's Center for Weight Management reports a 90-day mortality rate of 0.15 percent (or 1.5 patient deaths per thousand). Equally impressive is the ASMBS Centers of Excellence nationwide reported an aggregate outcome for June, 2006 (Pories), of 0.35 percent.

"If you presented with heart disease at a clinic or hospital and needed surgery, you would more than likely get the treatment you needed immediately," Walters says. The same consideration is not given to obese patients

suffering or "dying" from their type 2 diabetes.

Months of psychological evaluations, nutrition counseling, and stipulations are required before patients are allowed proper care.

"Obesity is a complex, chronic disorder with serious adverse consequences for health which requires a comprehensive approach to both prevention and treatment," IDF task force experts state. "People affected by severe obesity often struggle not only with the health and physical consequences of their chronic condition, but discrimination at work, socially, and within the healthcare system."

Retirement party cards were appreciated

The cards were great – of course, I cried!

As I read the e-mails and cards, I knew again that I had the best job ever.

It was so nice to hear from

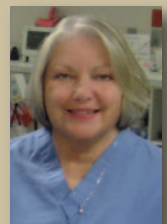
everyone, and I appreciate the kind thoughts.

I do miss seeing everyone, but at the same time enjoy retirement.

The Center for Weight

Management teams will continue to take excellent care of you.

Best wishes to all on their weight-loss journeys.



Sandy Jones, PA-C

Sandy

St. Joseph's Area Health Services

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Bariatric calendar of events

Y Weight? Support Group

July 14: "Making Healthy Choices - Dining Out in a Healthy Way."

July 28: "Getting Where You Want to Be!"

Aug. 11: Open discussion.

Aug. 25: "Making Healthy Choices - Grocery Shopping."

Sept. 8: "Breaking Plateaus."

Sept. 22: "Structuring Behavior Change Related to Eating Habits," with Joel Kirchner, PsyD.

Y Weight? support group meetings are held at 4:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month in Lower Level Conference Rooms B & C. Check out our website at www.weightmanagementmn.com for updated support group information or to find a support group in your community.

Graduate Course Support Group

July 21: "Grieving Unmet Expectations."

Aug. 18: "Just Do It!"

Sept. 15: "Labs, Other Medical Issues After the First Year."

Graduate Course Support Group meetings are held at

5:30 - 6:30 p.m. on the third Thursdays of the month in Lower Level Conference Rooms B & C.

Dates to remember

July 18 & Sept 26: Free weight-loss information session in Fargo, ND. Held from 6-8 p.m. at the Ramada Plaza Suites. Call Stacey at 218-732-2837 to register.

Aug. 13: Northwoods Triathlon in Nevis. Watch the Center for Weight Management's sprint triathlon teams and individuals swim, bike and run.

Oct. 7&8: Annual Retreat. Take in the fall splendor of the Smokey Hills during the Center for Weight Management's Weekend in the Pines: Breaking Barriers. This year, we expect to switch up our game so that you can leave with a new focus and feeling recharged and energized. We will give your workout routines a boost, get you back to the POWER basics. The weekend is a way to reward your spirit and infuse new energy into your commitment to staying healthy. Save the date and watch for more information as the fall retreat list of events take shape.