



Preparing Patients for Success

at the Center for
Weight Loss Surgery

Newton-Wellesley Hospital has been a leader in the field of bariatric surgery for more than 10 years. Patients come from throughout New England to undergo gastric bypass at the Center for Weight Loss Surgery, which is fully accredited by the American College of Surgeons.

Many factors contribute to obesity such as medical conditions, genetics, eating disorders and environmental and metabolic issues. Research shows that once a person becomes obese, dieting and exercise have a limited ability to sustain long-term weight loss.

The Center offers a comprehensive program providing ongoing support to patients before and after surgery including lifestyle modification strategies to ensure long-term weight loss success. As part of this multidisciplinary approach, patients receive behavioral, nutritional and surgical care and a complete follow-up plan.

“Surgery is a tool towards long-term weight loss, but patients also need to have social, nutritional, behavioral and medical support to achieve their weight loss goals,” says Sheila Partridge, MD, Surgeon and Medical Director of the Center for Weight Loss Surgery. “Surgery is one component of our program, but our multidisciplinary approach includes treating all the various needs of our patients.”

To help patients overcome their struggles with obesity, the Center’s multidisciplinary approach incorporates services to treat all aspects of the disease including:

- Surgery
- Nutrition education and counseling
- Psychological counseling and referrals
- Peer support groups
- Long-term medical follow up
- Advanced, state-of-the-art Hospital services

“This multidisciplinary approach is a key component of our surgery program,” says Dr. Partridge. “When a patient becomes involved in a program that stresses behavior modification, exercise, support group meetings and good follow up, the patient can then combine these components with gastric bypass surgery and have a durable tool enabling them to lose weight and maintain long-term health.”

Patients who come for treatment at the Center have complete access to a full-service hospital including specialized support services. These experts are dedicated to treating the life-threatening conditions experienced by many obese patients. Some of the specialties include Pulmonary Medicine, Cardiology, Gastroenterology, Radiology, Endocrinology, Neurology, Anesthesiology and the Sleep Medicine Center and Laboratory.

“Our Center has a great track record of healthy, satisfied patients,”

says Dr. Partridge. “We are constantly striving to make the experience better for our patients.”

Weight Loss Surgery

Surgeons use a minimally invasive technique to perform gastric bypass surgery. The Center primarily offers the “Gold Standard” – Laparoscopic Roux-en-Y Gastric Bypass surgery – a restrictive, malabsorptive and metabolic procedure that bypasses the upper stomach and decreases the size of the stomach for limited food intake. Detailed information about these surgical procedures is available at www.nwh.org/weightloss and at the New Patient Instructional Meetings (*see sidebar article*).

Gastric bypass surgery is an option for patients who have been unsuccessful losing weight through diet, exercise and other non-surgical methods. This surgery has been proven to be the only successful, long-term treatment option for patients who have not had success using a non-surgical approach. After surgery, patients typically lose

65 to 85 percent of their excess weight.

Some patients lose up to 100 percent of their excess weight. Further research shows that even after 10 years, most patients lose and maintain at least 50 percent of their excess weight loss and maintain the significant health benefits associated with this weight loss.

“Weight loss surgery is not a cure for obesity; however, it is an effective way to reduce excess weight and alleviate the serious conditions that are acquired as a result of this disease,” says Dr. Partridge. “Surgery does not replace the need for following a healthy diet and a regular physical activity program. In fact, the success of the surgery depends on the patient’s commitment to making these

lifestyle changes. It is also important for patients to follow up with medical professionals and participate in support groups.”

While many patients look forward to a positive change in appearance, there are compelling medical reasons to undergo surgery such as improving health and reducing co-morbidities – diseases resulting from obesity. The added weight of morbid obesity can stress many systems within the human body resulting in co-morbidities. These conditions can significantly reduce life expectancy, cause a severe deterioration of health and lower quality of life. Candidates for surgery include patients who:

- Weight more than 100 pounds over their ideal body weight.
- Have a body mass index (BMI) of 40.
- Have a BMI of 35 to 40 with the presence of serious co-morbid conditions such as sleep apnea, type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

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– Sheila Partridge, MD,
Surgeon and Medical
Director of the Center
for Weight Loss Surgery

Quality Leadership

Sheila Partridge, MD

Medical Director,
Center for Weight Loss Surgery



Dr. Partridge graduated from Cornell University Medical College and completed her residency in general surgery at the Beth-Israel Deaconess Medical Center and Harvard Medical School. She has expertise in bariatric, laparoscopic, gastrointestinal and breast surgery. Dr. Partridge has been instrumental in starting the Center for Weight Loss Surgery at Newton-Wellesley Hospital.

Pablo Gazmuri, MD

Associate Medical Director,
Center for Weight Loss Surgery



Dr. Gazmuri graduated from the University of Chile Medical School. He then attended the Harvard Medical School residency program in general surgery at the New England Deaconess Hospital. In addition to specializing in weight loss surgery, Dr. Gazmuri has devoted time to gastrointestinal surgery, breast and colon cancer surgery and vascular surgery during his 25 years as a surgeon.

Enrique Marquez Sta.Ana V, MD

Surgeon,
Center for Weight Loss Surgery



Dr. Sta.Ana received his medical degree from Marshall University School of Medicine and completed his internship and residency in general surgery at St. Elizabeth's Medical Center in Boston. He completed his fellowship in laparoscopic surgery at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center. He has completed research and presented on a variety of subjects including minimally invasive techniques.

Improving Quality of Life

The most significant benefit of gastric bypass surgery is reducing the prevalence of these life-threatening co-morbidities. Common conditions include:

- **Type 2 diabetes** - Obese individuals develop a resistance to insulin, which regulates blood sugar levels. This high blood sugar can cause serious damage to the body.
- **High blood pressure and heart disease** - Obesity strains the ability of the heart to function properly, which can lead to strokes and significant heart and kidney damage.
- **Osteoarthritis of weight-bearing joints** - Additional weight on the joints results in rapid wear and tear, along with pain caused by inflammation. Bones and muscles of the back are constantly strained, resulting in disk problems, pain and decreased mobility.
- **Sleep apnea and respiratory problems** - Fat deposits in the tongue and neck can cause intermittent obstruction of the air passage resulting in loud snoring, frequent periods when breathing ceases and episodes of restlessness and partial awakening.
- **Gastroesophageal reflux and heartburn** - Acid from the stomach enters the esophagus causing gastroesophageal reflux with heartburn and acid indigestion, which can lead to esophageal cancer.

Gastric bypass surgery improves quality of life and reduces the prevalence of other health-related concerns such as shortness of breath, asthma attacks, low-back pain and urinary incontinence.

According to Dr. Partridge the field of weight loss surgery is continuing to evolve and change. Medical professionals at the Center are always learning more about methods for long-term success and incorporating those into the program. It is important for patients to take advantage of all the services offered at the Center.

"Patients must be committed to joining a program – not just having surgery. Our successful patients make it a point to stay informed and make long-term medical follow up a major component of their life after surgery," says Dr. Partridge. "It is a weight loss journey and it is a big responsibility on their part. They must commit to making significant changes that will ultimately lead to a happier, healthier and longer life."

Learn More about the Center for Weight Loss Surgery

Patients interested in learning more should attend the New Patient Instructional Meeting – held at Newton-Wellesley Hospital on the last Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm. This meeting provides in-depth information and resources for patients considering surgery. After patients attend the meeting, they can schedule an evaluation at the Center to meet with health care professionals and discuss their weight loss goals. The medical team works with each individual patient to create a plan that best fits his or her needs and health concerns. For more information about the New Patient Instructional Meeting, contact the Center at 617-243-3724.

To assist with the physical, emotional and social aspects of weight loss surgery, the Hospital also offers support groups for patients at various stages of gastric bypass. Four different groups meet each month – the New Patient Instructional Meeting, a group for patients zero to six months after surgery and two community support groups for patients post surgery.

For more information about the services and programs offered at Newton-Wellesley Hospital or to schedule an appointment with a physician, call CareFinder at 1-866-NWH-DOCS (694-3627) or visit our website at www.nwh.org.