



# Healthier You

A publication for those interested in Vista Health System's Weight Loss Surgery Program • Volume 4, Issue 2 • Fall 2008



## COORDINATOR'S MESSAGE: FINDING WAYS TO EXERCISE

by June Zaragoza, MPH, RD, LD

This fall we would like to emphasize the importance of fitting in exercise any way you can. Attend our support groups in October in Lindenhurst and November in Waukegan to see a demonstration of the Wii Fit program. Wii Fit is an extremely popular video game developed by Nintendo using the Wii console. Standing on the Wii Balance Board lets you do roughly 40 different activities such as yoga poses, strength training, aerobics, and balance games. You can also compare your fitness level to other players and with a body test based on your current age, weight, and balance assess your "Wii Fitness Age." If you've never done daily exercise this could be the way to make exercise fun and user friendly. Come and try it.

Also try counting the steps you take every day as a way to increase your activity and fitness level. Just putting a pedometer on your belt can make you walk 1500 extra steps a day. See the article on using pedometers on the next page. You can motivate yourself by doing the Walking Across America program. This is a program where you keep track of how many minutes you exercise each week. Each minute you exercise equals one mile. The goal is to make it across the lower 48 states from one location to another. Each person will have a car they can name and it will be placed on our bulletin board. Copy or fax us your monthly record so that we can move your car along. Call Stacey Van Zeyl, MS, ATC, our exercise physiologist at 847-356-4750 or email at [stacey\\_vanzeyl@chs.net](mailto:stacey_vanzeyl@chs.net) to be a part of this program.

In December, come hear Dr. William Lee speak to our support group on Wednesday, December 17th at 7 pm. He will talk about food and the holiday blues and other psychological issues related to weight loss surgery.

On the next page, see LaRissa's story about her successful first year as a gastric bypass patient. It can happen to you too. Have a great fall.

## FREE SEMINARS AND SUPPORT

Free monthly informational seminars are open to the public and are provided the second Monday of every month at **Vista Medical Center East** (Waukegan). These sessions are presented by independent, board-certified surgeons Dr. Aaron Siegel and Dr. Laurence Gibson ([www.lakecountysurgeons.com](http://www.lakecountysurgeons.com)), who perform weight loss surgery procedures:

- Provide information on both gastric bypass and adjustable gastric band procedures
- Review criteria necessary for surgery to be considered
- Explain necessary lifestyle changes to achieve success

### Our next seminars:

- Monday, October 13, Waukegan
- Monday, November 10, Lindenhurst
- Monday, December 8, Waukegan
- Monday, January 12, Lindenhurst

Call 847-360-4246 to register.

**Support groups** are available at Vista Medical Center East in Waukegan and at the Vista Surgery Center in Lindenhurst. These are an integral part of aftercare for individuals who undergo weight loss surgery and also provide a way for those considering surgery to gain information, learn about the required lifestyle changes, and form a support network.

### Our next support group meetings:

7 pm, Vista Medical Center East  
Same Day Surgery Conf. Rm.

1324 N. Sheridan Rd., Waukegan

- Wednesday, October 15
- Wednesday, November 19
- Wednesday, December 17
- Wednesday, January 19

7 pm, Vista Surgery Center  
Community Room

1050 Red Oak Ln., Lindenhurst

- Monday, October 13
- Monday, December 8

*Those physically challenged and/or in need of an ASL interpreter may contact us up to one week before a community program to determine how we can facilitate their attendance. Tenemos disponibles los servicios de traducción al Español.*

(more ►)



Visit our web site at [www.vistaweightlossurgery.com](http://www.vistaweightlossurgery.com)

VISTA MEDICAL CENTER EAST • 1324 NORTH SHERIDAN ROAD • WAUKEGAN, ILLINOIS • 1-800-843-2464

## LARISSA HARRINGTON: GASTRIC BYPASS GAVE HER A SECOND CHANCE



LaRissa 09-06-08

by June Zaragoza, MPH, RD, LD

Before having weight loss surgery every day was a struggle for LaRissa. She says, “I was in pain, tired, and short of breath. I had sleep apnea and my head was hurting.” She didn’t have the patience for her job as a day care provider and felt like she was a burden to everybody. Finally, she decided she didn’t want to live that way anymore.

It was scary and a big decision to have surgery, but “I did a lot of research and knew what I was

getting into.” She chose the bypass over the band because it was quicker and she didn’t want to go back for the fills. Also she stated, “I needed something fast.”

After losing 94 lbs in the first year, LaRissa says, “I feel so much better. I can walk stairs without stopping. Life is so much better for me.” She feels good about how she handles her job. “I have less anger issues, my emotions are much better. I’m just like a little kid with them again.”

Sometimes she still misses food. “You still want to eat, still want to have your best friend with you. I can’t have that big juicy burger with fries with a big piece of cake. My friend is a little piece of chicken. I can eat a very small piece of dessert. Now I don’t have that guilt.”

But LaRissa cautions that weight loss surgery doesn’t solve all your problems. “I have self-image problems and I still feel like people are looking at me.” Before she could tell they were looking at her with disgust because of her weight and sometimes wouldn’t even speak to her. Now she says, “They treat you much nicer when you’re an average person.” And finally she states, “I just wish I had done it earlier.”

LaRissa would also like to thank her surgeon, Dr. Gibson, and the staff here at Vista Medical Center East (June, Stacey, and the floor staff) for all their help.

See LaRissa’s story along with other successes on our website [www.vistaweightlossurgery.com](http://www.vistaweightlossurgery.com).



LaRissa 08-06-07

## USING AND MAKING PEDOMETERS FUN

by Stacey Van Zeyl, MS, ATC

Did you know it is recommended that we all take 10,000 steps (5 miles) a day to achieve good health? The average American takes 5,000 or even less. Who has time to count their steps? That’s where the pedometer comes in. A pedometer is a nifty little gadget that counts your footsteps by sensing your body motion. For an example of pedometer use see Morgan Spurlock in his DVD “Super Size Me.” He wore a pedometer to deliberately keep his activity level low as he tested the effect of a sedentary fast food lifestyle on his health. See his entertaining video for what happened.

Pedometers range in price from \$5 to around \$20 for a fancy one with gadgets. Some of the features you can find in a pedometer include:

1. Step counter
2. Clock
3. Stopwatch
4. Calorie expenditure estimators
5. Distance and speed estimators
6. Flip case to protect from accidental bumping

### Things You Should Know Before Using a Pedometer

1. Stride length – you will need to measure the length of your stride while walking normally from either heel to heel or toe to toe. This is best done with a friend, a piece of paper, shoes off and wet feet.
  - a. Set out the piece of paper or several pieces together.
  - b. Get feet wet.
  - c. Walking normally about 15 feet before the paper and keep walking through it.
  - d. Measure distance from heel to heel.
  - e. This is your stride length (average is about 22 inches and higher for taller people.)
2. Using your mode button set the stride length into pedometer.
3. Make sure that your step count is back at 0 at the beginning of each day.
4. For 2 weeks write down how many steps you take each day and then average it out.
5. If you are under 5,000 steps, let 5,000 be your first goal.
6. Then, increase the number of steps taken weekly by 100-200 until you reach at least 8,000 with the ultimate goal of between 10-12,000 steps daily to lose weight.

Join our Walking Across American program described in the Coordinator’s Message to help achieve your goal. ■

### VISTA’S WEIGHT LOSS SURGERY PROGRAM

Our hospital-based surgical weight loss program and multidisciplinary team can help you improve high blood pressure, diabetes, sleep apnea, arthritis and back pain. For more information, visit our website at [www.vistaweightlossurgery.com](http://www.vistaweightlossurgery.com).