



A Healthier You

A publication for those interested in Vista Health's Weight Loss Surgery Program • Volume 2, Issue 2 • Spring 2006



COORDINATOR'S MESSAGE

June Zaragoza, MPH, RD, LD

There are many good reasons for continuing to come to our support group whether you have had your surgery already or not. We meet regularly on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Typically we have between 15-20 people including a few spouses and other support people. During the last two meetings, we taste tested dietary supplements (*see later stories for more information*). Other times we have guest speakers. Our program exercise physiologist Stacey Van Zeyl, MS, ATC, will come and talk to us on Wednesday, July 19th.

Attending group reminds you about the importance of continuing to take supplements, particularly if you have the gastric bypass, and, in general, to keep watching what you eat and to exercise regularly. Seeing people just starting the process can remind you of what it felt like before getting any help. It's also an opportunity to help others who may be struggling. We pass around a phone list and if the name is starred that person is willing to receive and give calls in a support network.

We are also starting a **clothing swap** for those of you who are losing weight and need new clothes and want to donate your discards. Bring up to 3 outfits of "gently" used clothing and exchange them for others. We have no storage space so at the end of the evening extra clothes will be donated to Salvation Army. Come early at 6:30 PM to "go shopping." Look forward to seeing you at the next Wednesday meeting.

Please feel free to call me at **847-360-2439** with questions or email me at jzaragoza@vistahealth.com.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Those who feel out of control with their weight and eating often feel hopeless and depressed. Weight loss surgery effectively helps you lose weight and increase your feelings of hope. It can give you an ability to be in control of your life in a way you may never have felt before. Let us help you improve high blood pressure, diabetes, sleep apnea, arthritis and back pain. Our patients tell us they want to be able to get down on the floor to play with their kids or grandkids, fit into that seat at Great America, and sit in a plane without a seat belt extender. Our hospital-based surgical weight loss program and multi-disciplinary team can help you do this.

Patients enter into the program either through referral by their primary care physician or self-referral. All patients must go through a thorough evaluation including nutritional counseling, psychological evaluation and exercise assessment.

EDUCATION AND SUPPORT

Free monthly informational seminars are open to the public and are provided the second Monday of every month at **Victory Memorial Hospital** (Waukegan). These sessions are presented by independent, board-certified surgeons Dr. Aaron Siegel and Dr. Laurence Gibson, who perform weight loss surgery procedures:

- Provide information on the procedures available
- Review criteria necessary for the procedure to be considered
- Explain necessary lifestyle changes to achieve success

Our next seminars:

- Monday, June 12 • 7 p.m.
- Monday, July 10 • 7 p.m.
- Monday, August 14 • 7 p.m.

Call **1-847-360-4246** to register.

(more →)



Visit our web site at www.vistaweightlossurgery.com

VICTORY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL • 1324 NORTH SHERIDAN ROAD • WAUKEGAN, ILLINOIS • 1-800-843-2464

A **support group** is available at Victory Memorial Hospital and is an integral part of aftercare for individuals who undergo either weight loss surgery procedure. Support groups also provide a way for those considering surgery to gain information, learn about the required lifestyle changes, and form a support network. We meet at Victory Hospital on the third Wednesday of every month in the Same Day Surgery Conference Room. Upcoming dates are:

- Wednesday, June 21
- Wednesday, July 19
- Wednesday, August 16

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.



BARIATRIC TEAM UPDATE

Just prior to surgery all bariatric patients meet with nursing and pharmacy staff for their pre-surgical orientation and medication review. Kris Canham, RPh, is our Bariatric Team Pharmacist. She went to Pharmacy School at St. Louis College of Pharmacy in St. Louis, Missouri, graduating in 1982. Primarily she prepared to work in a retail pharmacy. Since then she has worked mostly in hospital pharmacies, where she states, "I have learned more than I could have ever learned in school."

The pharmacist evaluates the patient's medications for two purposes, first to determine if there is a need to stop a medication prior to surgery. For example, it is advisable to stop taking aspirin before surgery because it can prolong bleeding times (your primary care physician may have additional information about your medications). Secondly, since solid pills are prohibited for a month after surgery, an appropriate form of the medication needs to be substituted. Some blood pressure pills can be crushed and taken with applesauce or liquid. Others that have an extended time release cannot be crushed, so an immediate release version or another medication will have to be substituted. A medication that needs to stay in an acidic environment may not rest for a long enough time in the new smaller pouch and will be less effective. Also after the bypass the stomach pouch has less stomach acid than before. Some medications come in liquid form but the volume required may be too much for the new smaller stomach. It is important to let your doctor know after the meeting with the pharmacist if a new prescription will be required and obtain it before surgery.

Another medication issue is what to take after surgery for pain. Liquid Tylenol is the best choice because it does not erode the stomach. NSAIDs (Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) such as Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), and Naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn), and aspirin can cause gastrointestinal bleeding. One gastric bypass patient who had to be hospitalized due to bleeding from overuse of NSAIDs.

Some psychiatric medications may need altered dosages after the gastric bypass due to malabsorption, particularly Lithium. These will need to be monitored closely with your psychiatrist.

DIETARY SUPPLEMENT UPDATE

It is important to include as least three small servings of healthy fats each day to avoid a fatty acid deficiency (a serving is 1 tsp of oil, mayonnaise or small pat of margarine). Essential fatty acids play an important role in fat transport and metabolism, immune function, and maintaining the function and integrity of cellular membranes. Omega-3 fatty acids, an essential fatty acid, are found in fish (herring, salmon, sardines, trout, tuna), fish oils, and some vegetable seeds (olive, and canola oil). Omega-3 fatty acids also help the body fight against inflammation, which can cause blood clotting and arthritis. In addition, a regular intake of fish or fish oils can help lower blood triglycerides and cholesterol and thus decrease the risk of cardiovascular disease. Generally it is recommended to eat fish at least twice a week. Fish oils can provide the same benefit without the possibility of added toxins such as mercury, PCBs and dioxins.*

During a support group we tasted an Omega-3 fatty acid supplement called Coromega, an orange flavored gel that is an alternative to capsules of fish oil. Visit their web site www.coromega.com for more information.

During another support group meeting, we taste tested a new protein supplement called Unjury, a whey protein supplement available in chocolate, vanilla, strawberry, and neutral flavors. It provides 20 grams of protein and is only 90 calories so is both low in carbohydrate and fat. Made from whey protein isolate, it has no lactose, which may trigger dumping syndrome in some gastric bypass patients. Check out recipe suggestions and information for how to order this produce at www.UNJURY.com or call 1-800-517-5111. ■

**"Can Omega-3 Supplements Help You Reel In the Health Benefits Of Fish?" Environmental Nutrition, April 2006, Volume 29, Number 4.*