



# A Healthier You

*A publication for those interested in Vista Health's Weight Loss Surgery Program • Volume 2, Issue 3 • Summer 2006*



## ONLINE SUPPORT FOR WEIGHT LOSS - COORDINATOR'S MESSAGE

*by June Zaragoza, MPH, RD, LD*

Successfully losing and keeping weight off is all about getting the right amount of support. Most bariatric support groups meet only once a month, so getting other contact in between some-

times is crucial. There are a number of online resources to help you. One of the most well-known is Bariatric Support Centers International, founded by Colleen Cook, a gastric bypass patient who had her surgery in 1995. Go to [www.bariatric-supportcenter.com](http://www.bariatric-supportcenter.com). Registration and a small fee are required. The site offers services such as chat rooms, a registry of support groups all around the country, information on supplements, and testimonials from other weight loss surgery patients. We are listed on their site. This support is available to you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Another health group not specifically for weight loss surgery patients is [www.SparkPeople.com](http://www.SparkPeople.com). This free nutrition and exercise web site has motivation articles/information about diet and exercise plans, recipes, and message boards. Some of the participants have had weight loss surgery. The site claims to be the web's largest healthy living community. Registration is required and you will receive daily emails on various topics to help you maintain your new lifestyle.

And last but not least, our support group has its own patient generated web page at <http://weigh-to-go-victory.tripod.com>. Check it out for meeting schedules, upcoming speakers, and information about our clothing swap plan. You can also post your story and before-and-after photographs there.

## VISTA'S WEIGHT LOSS SURGERY 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 through self-referral. All patients must go through a thorough evaluation including nutritional counseling, psychological evaluation and exercise assessment.

## 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, 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, October 9 • 7 p.m.
- Monday, November 13 • 7 p.m.
- Monday, December 11 • 7 p.m.

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

*(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

A **support group** is available at Vista Medical Center East 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 Vista Medical Center East on the third Wednesday of every month in the Same Day Surgery Conference Room. Upcoming dates are:

- Wednesday, October 18 • 7 p.m.
- Wednesday, November 15 • 7 p.m.
- Wednesday, December 20 • 7 p.m.

*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.*

## EXCUSES, EXCUSES!!

by Stacey Van Zeyl, MS, ATC

Check out these exercise excuses overcome by successful weight loss surgery patient and Certified Personal Fitness Trainer Tammy Bartz. These were published in the Bariatric Support Center's eNewsletter ([www.bariatricsupportcenter.com](http://www.bariatricsupportcenter.com)). See how many of these fit you. We'll add more in the next newsletter.

1. **Low Energy:** This excuse is a contradiction: You may feel too tired to exercise, but the best way to boost your energy is by exercising! Just ten minutes of brisk walking may increase your energy level for a couple of hours after. Lifting weights before bed may help you sleep better and increase your energy level the next day.
2. **No Time:** If you don't have a full hour to spend at the gym try breaking your workouts up into smaller increments. Try doing 10 minute sessions throughout the day. The health benefits are just as good as the traditional one hour sessions and you will be more likely to stick with it.
3. **Gym Phobia:** The first thing we need to overcome is comparing ourselves with others, and worrying what others are thinking about us. It's unrealistic and more often than not others are not judging us but worrying about the same thing as we are. These feelings may lead to frustration, and can sabotage our workouts. Instead, focus on your own goals and hire a trainer to help you make the most of your time at the gym. Gaining knowledge about exercises and equipment will help you overcome your fear. Joining a gender specific-only gym, may also help you to feel more comfortable.

## DIETARY SUPPLEMENT UPDATE

Bariatric Advantage ([www.bariatricadvantage.com](http://www.bariatricadvantage.com)) has come out with two new products that we taste tested at the support group. The first is a meal replacement mix that

comes in a ready to shake bottle (15 gms protein, 100 calories), and the second is a high protein breakfast cereal with a grape nuts like flavor that can also be mixed in the container (15 gms protein). Both come in various flavors.

**BOOK REVIEW** by June Zaragoza, MPH, RD, LD  
*The Success Habits of Weight-Loss Surgery Patients* by Colleen M. Cook, 2003, Bariatric Support Centers International, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Based on a formal survey of weight loss surgery patients, this book outlines what habits have proven successful for the most number of people. The book's strengths are due to the author's personal experiences as a weight loss surgery patient herself and the accumulated experiences of many patients. The results of the original survey were first published in the February 1999 issue of the *Obesity Surgery Journal*.

The primary principle is personal accountability; that is to take responsibility for your choices and be honest with yourself about what is working and what is not. Some of the tools to help with this include regular weighing, setting weight loss goals, and establishing other goals for your life.

The second principle is portion control. Whether using the band or the gastric bypass the idea is to help the body feel full. It's important to stop eating when feeling full, but also to learn to eat enough to get that way. Eating too little can lead to "grazing" instead of focusing on three high quality meals. Two other important principles are not drinking with meals and avoiding high calorie liquids. There are many other helpful ideas for achieving satiety in this section including an interesting technique called the "cottage cheese test."

The third principle or success habit is nutrition, with detailed discussions on the value of protein, vegetables, starches, and fats. Apart from gastric bypass patients needing to avoid concentrated sweets to prevent dumping syndrome, recommendations for nutrition are similar for both kinds of surgeries.

Proper fluid intake is discussed under principle 4, giving information on avoiding caffeine, alcohol, and carbonated beverages. Finally the importance of drinking enough water and the dangers of dehydration are reviewed.

Principle five promotes regular exercise, whether aerobic or strengthening. It is particularly important during the weight loss period, but also essential for weight loss maintenance. You can log your exercise as well as your food and keep track of your heart rate to measure exercise intensity.

Principle six discusses vitamins and supplements in detail, primarily for the gastric bypass patient. It is important for all weight loss surgery patients to get annual blood work to ensure good nutritional status. ■