

Weight Loss - What Are Your Options?

By Bruce Bodner, MD, Bariatric Surgeon

Now that spring is upon us, many people may be beginning to think about getting their bodies in shape for the summer weather. However, for individuals who are overweight, or even obese, the thought of wearing shorts, tank tops and swimsuits can cause feelings of discomfort and anxiety.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than one-third of adults in the United States are considered obese. Additionally, adult obesity rates for Raynham (25.1%), Taunton (29.7%), and Middleboro (25.8%), and are all above the state average (24.5%), according to data from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

People who are overweight are more prone to many chronic health conditions and diseases. These include strokes, sleep apnea, high blood pressure, heart attacks, gallstones, cirrhosis, degenerative joint disease and diabetes. However, studies show that losing just 5-10 percent of your body weight can lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels, and reduce your diabetes risk. Experts recommend getting at least 30 minutes of moderate activity on most or all days to stay healthy, but you may need even more to actually lose weight. People with diabetes in particular may struggle to lose weight because some diabetes medications may contribute to weight gain.

So, where do you start? First, you should always speak with your primary care physician about what type of weight loss program or physical activity is appropriate for you, based on your current health.

Here are some recommendations for getting started, once you've received the green light from your PCP:

- **Do it first!** An early morning walk can reset your metabolism for the whole day.
- **Start slowly.** Try walking 5-10 minutes a day for the first week, then gradually add to that time.
- **Break it up.** Carve up your workouts into manageable intervals - 30 minutes here, 30 minutes there.
- **Take the plunge.** Water workouts won't stress your joints. Check your local YMCA or recreation center to see if they offer water aerobics classes.
- **Go the path of most resistance.** While the elevator is always easier than the stairs, walking up a flight of stairs can really get the heart pumping.
- **Count household tasks.** Whether you're vacuuming or lugging groceries home, daily chores that keep you moving count.

In addition to exercise, people who are overweight or obese should follow a healthy diet - avoid carbohydrates like soda, potatoes, bread, pasta, and stick to protein, vegetables and fruit.

If you've already tried to lose weight, but have been unsuccessful, weight-loss surgery may be an option for you. Weight loss surgery is not simple or trivial; however, those who have a body mass index over 40 and have failed real attempts at diet and exercise should certainly consider it. Surgery may be even more indicated if you have a serious weight-related condition, such as diabetes, heart disease or sleep apnea.

Weight-loss surgery involves reducing the size of the stomach or redirecting part of the lower intestine, or both. The surgery requires a lifelong change in diet and exercise habits in order to lose weight and keep it off. Types of weight-loss surgery include Gastric Bypass, Sleeve Gastrectomy (also known as Gastric Sleeve), and Laparoscopic Gastric Banding (also known as LAP-BAND®).

For more information about Bariatric weight-loss surgery, or to attend an online seminar, visit steward.org/weight-loss-centers.

Morton Hospital is now offering Gastric Sleeve Surgery at its new Center for Weight Control. To learn more, call 508-823-1101.

**Morton
Hospital**

A STEWARD FAMILY HOSPITAL

Be Well with Morton Hospital

Steward