

Weight Loss Surgery

An Option for the Nation's Obesity Epidemic

By every measure, obesity has reached epidemic proportions in America. Survey results from the 2007 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System indicate that more than 25 percent of Americans, approximately 75 million people, are obese, and this number continues to grow at an alarming rate. Former Surgeon General, C. Everett Koop, M.D., stated that obesity is the nation's number one health care crisis.



By Eric Schlesinger, M.D.,
FACS

The obesity epidemic isn't merely aesthetic; it's a matter of life and death. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that obesity related illness is the second leading preventable cause of death in the United States.

Obesity can take 13 to 20 years off of a person's life by putting obese people at risk for more than 30 diseases including heart disease, diabetes and cancer. While weight loss surgery is not for everyone, for those people suffering from morbid obesity, it is a viable option to a healthier and longer life.

Weight loss surgery can help obese people lose 75 percent or more of their excess weight. With a comprehensive program that provides life-long follow-up, counseling and education, the resulting weight loss and all of its

benefits can last a lifetime. And, as employers increasingly recognize the affect of obesity on labor and health care costs, many insurance companies now include bariatric surgery in their employee benefits packages. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) states that surgery is the only proven weight loss method for the vast majority of morbidly obese people.

Patients considering weight loss surgery, have multiple options. These include:

- Gastric bypass.
- LAP-BAND® gastric banding.
- Duodenal switch.
- Vertical sleeve gastrectomy.

These procedures can be performed either by the classic open technique or laparoscopically. It has been my experience, as well as that of other

bariatric surgeons, that when properly performed, both approaches result in identical length of hospital stay. Pain is easily controlled regardless of the approach and the recovery and adaptation time are comparable.

Choosing where to have a weight loss operation can appear to be a daunting task. Be certain to investigate not only the surgeon, but also the weight loss program. The program must be comprehensive. A comprehensive program provides you with service that begins when you first enter the office, and carries you through the operation and continues for the rest of your life. The program should include a team of dedicated, trained, experienced health care professionals, headed by your surgeon.

In addition to weight loss surgery-related medical care, the program should also provide nutritional education and

counseling, emotional support, and a diverse approach to exercise tailored to your condition, needs and preferences. Your long term success depends on all of these factors.

Our practice, Surgical Weight Loss Solutions at Tempe St. Luke's, also specializes in revision weight loss surgery, operations for people who have had bariatric surgery, but did not achieve or maintain their weight loss. The most frequent causes for this include programs that are less than comprehensive, poor long-term follow-up, or operations that were not best suited to the patient's needs and condition.

Surgical Weight Loss Solutions is proud to offer the full array of surgical weight loss options combined with a truly comprehensive program dedicated to life-long care. We are deeply committed to your health and success.

This information is provided by Surgical Weight Loss Solutions at Tempe St. Luke's as general information only.

About Eric Schlesinger, M.D., FACS

A diplomate of the American Board of Surgery, Dr. Schlesinger is a bariatric surgeon and serves as the medical director of Surgical Weight Loss Solutions at Tempe St. Luke's, a Physician Group of Arizona, Inc., practice. Dr. Schlesinger is recognized as an ASMBS Bariatric Surgery Center of Excellence surgeon by the Surgical Review Corporation. He also serves as the medical director of the Bridges Center for Surgical Weight Management at Tempe St. Luke's Hospital. Dr. Schlesinger has more than 15 years of bariatric surgery experience and specializes in adjustable gastric banding, Roux-en-Y gastric bypass, Biliopancreatic diversion with duodenal switch and vertical sleeve gastrectomy. In addition to performing both laparoscopic and open bariatric procedures, he has extensive experience in general surgery, emergency care and trauma surgery.



Surgical Weight Loss Solutions at Tempe St. Luke's

1492 S. Mill Avenue, Suite 201, Tempe, AZ 85281 | Phone: (480) 968-6007 | Fax: (480) 968-0828
weightlossarizona.com | bridgesaz.com