

Bariatric Surgery

Program Facts for Physicians and Patients

In the United States, 30 percent of adults or about 60 million people, are clinically obese — weighing 30 pounds or more over their ideal body weight (Body Mass Index or BMI > 30kg/m2). Obesity has become a major health problem for the United States and especially in New York City. Ten percent of all healthcare expenditures in this country are now spent on managing or treating obesity and its many complications. In the borough of Queens 20-30 percent of residents, depending on the neighborhood, are clinically obese.

Bariatric Surgery (Weight Loss Surgery) is offered to motivated individuals who have been unable to lose weight through diet and exercise and who are at least 75 to 100 pounds over their ideal body weight. Long-term studies have shown that bariatric surgery for these individuals results in significant, and more importantly, sustained weight loss. In addition, it can bring about dramatic improvement and sometimes resolution in patients suffering from diabetes, hypertension and a number of other obesity related complications. Studies have shown that patients who undergo obesity surgery live longer lives (because of the weight loss and improvement in obesity related medical problems) when compared to a group of individuals who do not have surgery and remain obese.

An experienced, multidisciplinary team provides bariatric care (or obesity surgery) to patients at New York Hospital Queens (NYHQ). The surgeons – Drs. Stephen Merola and Armando Castro – offer the full range of bariatric procedures currently available in the United States and they perform these procedures using minimally invasive or laparoscopic techniques. The surgeons are also aided by a bariatric coordinator who helps patients navigate their way through the various testing that is required before surgery in order to make certain the procedure can be performed safely. Additionally, this coordinator serves as a resource to help each patient with their weight loss journey after surgery so that they can obtain their best results possible. The NYHQ team also includes a group of nutritionists, psychologists and exercise specialists.

What Services Are Offered?

The team uses a detailed pre-operative evaluation, state-of-the-art surgical methods and careful post-operative management to obtain the best results and they have done this with an extraordinary record of safety.

NYHQ currently offers three types of weight loss operations: Laparoscopic Roux-en-Y Gastric Bypass, Adjustable gastric Banding and Vertical Sleeve Gastrectomy.

• Laparoscopic Roux-en-Y Gastric Bypass is currently the operation to which all other obesity operations are compared. It has consistently produced dramatic and lasting weight loss in patients who are severely obese and has brought about

significant improvement in a patient's obesity related medical problems (i.e. diabetes, hypertension, sleep apnea). It is currently the most commonly performed obesity procedure in the United States.

- Adjustable Gastric Banding (also known as the "LAP-BAND") has been one of the most commonly performed weight loss operations outside of the United States over the past decade. The procedure was approved for use in the United States more than 5 years ago and is increasing in popularity. The band is placed near the upper stomach in order to lessen the amount of food that an individual can eat at one sitting. It is often the procedure of choice for patients given that no stapling is performed as it would be in a gastric bypass procedure, and this procedure is reversible.
- **Vertical Sleeve Gastrectomy**, also known as a sleeve gastrectomy or gastric sleeve procedure, is a type of obesity surgery in which a portion of the stomach is removed to create a smaller stomach with less capacity for food. The new smaller stomach is roughly the size and shape of a banana and like the gastric band, it severely limits food intake. In the last few years it has become an increasingly more popular option for patients.

What Insurances Do We Accept?

The NYHQ Obesity Surgery Program currently accepts most major commercial insurance plans. For questions about the surgeons' participation in a particular insurance plan, please call our office at 718-445-0220. In order to obtain the most accurate information pertaining to your insurance it is recommended that a potential patient also check with his/her insurance carrier prior to an appointment.

FOR CONSULTATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

How Do I Get an Appointment?

Individuals interested in learning more about weight loss surgery at NYHQ are asked to attend a very informative orientation seminar at the hospital. To find out the dates and times of upcoming seminars please call (718) 445-0220 and either choose the menu options for Dr Merola's coordinator, Dr Castro's coordinator, or press menu option #9 for the bariatric coordinator. Language interpretation assistance is readily available.

How do I find a Bariatric Surgery Support Group meeting?

Bariatric Surgery Support Groups are held the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. For more information and registration call 718-670-2082.

Where Are These Services Offered?

At the Hospital: 56-45 Main Street, Flushing, NY 11355

For more information see nyhq.org