

## FOCUS ON YOU: Bariatric & Metabolic Surgery Options

By Keith A. Kreitz, MD, Surgeon, St. Mary Medical Center



Being overweight or obese has been described as an epidemic in the United States in recent years. The health risks are especially serious for people who are more than 100

pounds over their ideal weight. Bariatric and metabolic surgery can change people's lives.

Bariatric surgery helps people gradually lose weight in two ways: first, by restricting the amount of food that can be eaten, and second, decreasing the number of calories consumed each day. In addition to substantial weight loss, bariatric surgery helps reduce or eliminate many obesity-related health problems and metabolic disorders, including:

- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Sleep apnea
- Joint pain

Morbid obesity is a chronic disease that affects all aspects of life: physical, emotional, social, and more. Deciding to have bariatric surgery can help you feel better, look better, and most importantly, be healthier. With education and support before and after surgery, and commitment on your part, bariatric surgery can help you succeed in losing weight and keeping it off permanently.

### Minimally Invasive Options

When surgical techniques are minimally invasive, they typically mean less pain, a shorter hospital stay, and quicker recovery time after surgery. Some procedures may be performed using a robotic surgical system.

There are a few different options for bariatric procedures. Among them are:

**SLEEVE GASTRECTOMY:** This is one of the most common procedures performed. A thin sleeve of the stomach is preserved and the rest of the stomach is removed. The sleeve is about the size of a banana and limits the amount of food that can comfortably be eaten, which results in fewer calories being consumed.



**ROUX-EN-Y GASTRIC BYPASS:** This procedure is typically performed using laparoscopic tools inserted through small incisions in the abdomen. Gastric bypass surgery creates a smaller stomach and allows food to bypass the first part of the small intestine. This results in fewer calories being consumed, and in fewer calories being absorbed.

**DUAL-BALLOON NON-SURGICAL SYSTEM:** The dual balloon is an FDA-approved device that, by taking up room in your stomach, creates a feeling of fullness and helps you feel satisfied with less food. This procedure places two connected, medical-grade saline-filled balloons inside the stomach for a period of six months. The dual balloon comfortably conforms to the shape of the stomach and has a safety feature that prevents deflated balloons from passing into the intestines.

### Preparing for a Bariatric Procedure

If you are considering bariatric surgery, you can generally expect three to six months of in-depth medical evaluations, as well as extensive education about the medical, nutritional, and behavioral aspects of surgical weight loss, leading up to a scheduled surgery date. In addition, patients and family members attend support group meetings.

Before surgery, you will receive a private consultation with a bariatric surgeon and have a comprehensive physical examination to identify any medical conditions that may affect the surgery and its outcome. You also will have a psychological and nutritional assessment to determine if you are ready to make the permanent lifestyle choices needed to lose the weight and keep it off.

Bariatric teams include experienced, board-certified bariatric surgeons, specially trained nurses, registered dietitians, and exercise and physical therapists. Each plays an important role in helping you achieve your weight-loss and healthy-living goals.

**For more information or to schedule an appointment with Dr. Kreitz, call 215.710.5711.**

### Online Resources to Help You Succeed

The St. Mary Bariatric and Metabolic Surgery Program provides several features and a wide range of information to help you learn more about the program and various bariatric procedures online.

- Virtual information session: Watch Dr. Kreitz give an overview of the program, its components, and procedures available, from anywhere you access the Internet.
- Request an appointment: Fill out a form online, and a member of the Bariatric and Metabolic Surgery Team will contact you to schedule an initial consultation.
- Register to attend free informational sessions: Dr. Kreitz and the team provide regular in-person informational sessions, at which you can get all your questions answered.

**Visit [stmaryhealthcare.com/bariatrics](http://stmaryhealthcare.com/bariatrics) for these resources and more.**



### Am I A Candidate for Bariatric Surgery?

If you can answer "yes" to any of these questions, the St. Mary Bariatric and Metabolic Surgery Program may be right for you:

- Are you 100 pounds or more over your ideal weight, or have a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or greater?
- Is your BMI over 35, and do you have other chronic health conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes, or high cholesterol?
- Have you been unable to lose weight and keep it off, including efforts through medically supervised programs?
- Are you committed to permanently changing your eating and exercise habits?