



Mass General Brigham
Salem Hospital

Surgical Weight Management Program Information Packet

Salem Hospital

81 Highland Avenue

Salem, MA 01970

nsmcweightloss@partners.org

978-825-6505

Surgical Weight Management Team

Team Member	Contact Information
<p><u>Surgeons</u></p> <p>Nari Sabeti, M.D., FACS Surgical Medical Director, Bariatric Surgeon NPI# 1720209190</p> <p>Jaime A. Rivera, M.D., FACS Bariatric Surgeon NPI# 1487614418</p>	<p>MGH General Division of Community 104 Endicott St., Suite 200, Danvers, MA 01923 Phone: 978-882-6868 978-882-6839 (Dr. Sabeti) 978-882-6819 (Dr. Rivera)</p> <p>Fax: 978-882-6833</p>
<p><u>Program Coordinator</u></p> <p>Jennifer Racine, RD, LDN</p>	<p>Phone: 978-825-6505 Fax: 978-825-6585</p>
<p><u>Wellness Center</u></p> <p>Chrystina Krauser, CNP Theresa Davis, RD Amethyst Scolnick, RD Elisabeth Ngome, Medical Assistant Deanna Cushman, Administrative Assistant</p>	<p>Salem Hospital 81 Highland Avenue, Salem, MA 01970 Axelrod Building, Floor 7 Phone: 978-825-6505 Fax: 978-825-6585</p>
<p><u>Psychologists</u></p> <p>Ryan Garrity, PhD Julia Morgan, PysD Vanessa D’Orio, PhD</p>	<p>Mass General for Children 57 Highland Ave, Floor 2 Salem, MA 01970 Phone: 978-354-2705 Fax: 978-740-4960</p>

Other Helpful Contact Information

<p>MGH Referral and Registration Center (Call to obtain medical record number)</p>	<p>Phone: 1-866-211-6588</p>
<p>Financial Access Unit (Insurance questions related to cost of surgery)</p>	<p>Phone: 617-726-6828 or 726-3884</p>
<p>Mass General Brigham Service Center (Change or update patient insurance information)</p>	<p>Phone: 855-880-6762</p>

Pre-Op Appointment Checklist

Please call our office 978-825-6505 or email nsmcweightloss@partners.org for appointments with the Wellness Center.

_____ 1. Virtual Information Session

Complete this prior to your initial appointment:

- Discussion with primary care physician regarding weight loss surgery
- Copies of your primary care physician's notes for past 2 years
- Notes from primary care physician confirming that thyroid and adrenal causes have been ruled out as a cause of obesity or are stable

_____ 2. Initial visit with Nurse Practitioner

- Lab Work will be ordered 978-573-4444 option 3 to schedule lab appointment

_____ 3. Initial evaluation with Registered Dietitian

_____ 4. Participation in pre-op virtual nutrition education program

- Practicing New Habits
- Whole Body Health & Tools for Success
- Healing After Surgery

_____ 5. Follow up with Registered Dietitian (may require additional visits)

_____ 6. Initial evaluation with Surgeon

_____ 7. Psychological evaluation and testing 978-354-2705 (may require additional visits)

_____ 8. Follow up with Nurse Practitioner

_____ 9. Pre-Op Support Group attendance (at least 1)

_____ Stress Test 978-573-4444 (if necessary based on your medical history)

_____ Sleep Study 978-745-4489 (if necessary based on your medical history)

Once you have been medically cleared, maintained all program expectations and have met your insurance criteria we will then set a date for surgery.

Criteria for Surgery

- Candidates should be approximately 100 pounds overweight, with a BMI > 40. Candidates with a BMI between 35 – 40 with other medical conditions, such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and sleep apnea, may also qualify.
- Obesity has persisted for at least 2 years.
- Multiple medical weight loss attempts in past 2 years.
- Age is between 18 – 64. Candidates who are 65 or older are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- No untreated metabolic cause for obesity, such as thyroid or adrenal disorders.
- No psychological or medical problems that would limit surgical success (candidates with inpatient psychiatric admission within the past two years will be discussed on a case-by-case basis).
- The candidate should not be drug, alcohol or tobacco dependent.
- If candidate is a current smoker, must agree to quit and must be smoke free for a minimum of three months prior to surgery.
- If candidate has history of substance abuse, must be substance-free for a minimum of two years.
- Candidates must understand that the surgical operation is only part of the total treatment for his/her obesity and must commit to long-range lifestyle change and follow-up.
- The candidate cannot be pregnant and must be willing to postpone pregnancy for one to two years after surgery.
- The candidate must be willing to complete a pre-operative evaluation with the surgeon, Heart and Wellness Center, and a psychologist.
- The candidate must attend at least one support group prior to surgery.
- The candidate must be willing to complete a comprehensive pre-operative and post-operative program at the Heart and Wellness Center.

Calling Your Health Plan

Your objective is to collect information from your insurer to determine what your plan of action will be to prepare for weight loss surgery.

Your Call

- ❖ When you get through to a service representative at your health plan, record the name of the person you speak with. Record the date and time of conversation and obtain a confirmation number. Take good notes.
- ❖ Ask your insurer what policy they have on specific surgeries (Gastric Bypass, Sleeve Gastrectomy). They may ask for a procedure code (CPT code): Gastric Bypass 43644, Sleeve Gastrectomy 43775. Ask to have your criteria for bariatric surgery sent to you.
 - Ask if surgery is covered at Salem Hospital/North Shore Medical Center.
 - Ask specifically what they cover/ how much they cover (coverage varies immensely depending upon your specific plan with your provider.)
 - **It is important to determine if Salem Hospital is in network or out of network.**
 - Inquire about deductibles and any additional out-of-pocket costs.
 - Ask what are the criteria for covering weight loss surgery? Some examples include:
 - Do you need to be on a medically supervised diet for 3 months?
 - Do you need to participate in a specific program with your insurance?
 - Do you need to be seen by a nutritionist more than once?
 - Ask them to send you the written policy or where it is available online.
- ❖ Find out what types of expenses your health plan will reimburse. You may be responsible for paying copayments for all visits to clinicians, including dietitians, registered nurses and psychologists.
- ❖ Confirm referral requirements. Are you able to schedule an appointment with a dietitian and a psychologist yourself directly or do you need to be referred to them by your primary care physician? Also confirm whether you need a formal referral from the primary care physician in order to see a specific bariatric surgeon.
- ❖ Before hanging up, make sure you've recorded all the information above on paper and asked for clarification on any questions you had.

Appointments

Surgeon

You will meet with your surgeon to discuss the surgery and have him answer all your questions. Please make sure you have obtained the necessary referrals from your primary care physician prior to this appointment. Your insurer can explain what is required of you and what your co-pay will be.

After an exam and evaluation, the surgeon will make the determination if you are an appropriate candidate for the procedure. Additional testing and a referral to a specialist may be needed before making a final decision, which will be based on the surgeon's expert knowledge of the procedure as well as what will be in your best interest for your health. If the surgeon feels you would not benefit from surgery, or if this is not a good time to proceed with this surgery, please feel free to call the administrator at 978-825-6505 to discuss other weight loss options available to you at Salem Hospital.

Heart and Wellness Center

At the Heart and Wellness Center you will have a comprehensive medical and nutritional evaluation. You will need to obtain the referrals necessary for these evaluations.

Psychological Evaluation

During this appointment you will undergo psychological testing and evaluation. Insurance covers this appointment in most cases. If your insurance does not cover this, there will be a charge to you. This charge will be explained in detail when you call to schedule the appointment.

This psychological evaluation is an important tool when putting together a program specifically for your needs. It is also required by your insurer. Please note that this appointment takes between two and three hours.

Surgical Data and Insurer Pre-approval

All insurers require that we obtain pre-approval for the surgical procedure and prior authorization for your admission to the hospital. Each insurance company has different guidelines, so you may be asked for help in obtaining documentation to speed up this process. We will submit all necessary information along with a letter requesting the surgery to your insurer. We will also schedule your surgery date.

This is a good time for you to prepare for your surgery. If you are a smoker or user of tobacco, we ask you to seek help in quitting. If you are in an exercise program, please continue. If not, ask your medical doctor if you may begin. These two things will make your recovery from surgery faster, safer and ultimately you will be healthier for it. We do require that you are smoke, drug and alcohol free prior to your surgery.

Your surgeon's office will also contact you to:

- Schedule an appointment with the blood bank for donation of your blood if you request it.
- Confirm your surgical date.
- Schedule your final pre-op visit with surgeon.
- Schedule your pre-admission testing appointment at Salem Hospital.
- Arrange any further pre-operative testing that your surgeon requires.

Pre-admission testing

You will be notified of your appointment with our pre-admission testing department. At this time you will meet with our surgical nursing staff, who will review with you how to prepare for your surgery. You will also meet with someone from our anesthesiology department who will review your medical record and determine the best anesthesia plan and method of pain management for you. You will be asked to sign consent for anesthesia and consent for transfusion. If you have any questions, be sure and ask them.

Once you have completed these appointments, you are ready for surgery.

Agreement to Participate in Post-operative Follow-up Care

❖ Post-Operative Follow Up Appointments

- 1 week post-surgery with Surgeon
- 2-4 weeks post-surgery with Registered Dietitian
- 3 months post-surgery with Nurse Practitioner and Registered Dietitian
- 6 months post-surgery with Nurse Practitioner and Registered Dietitian
- 12 months post-surgery with Surgeon and Registered Dietitian
- Annual appointments with Nurse Practitioner and Registered Dietitian

❖ Support Group

After surgery, regular attendance at our monthly support group is strongly suggested and will increase long-term success.

❖ Psychological Care

Initial pre-operative evaluation and testing will determine if post-operative care will be needed. Psychological services are always available.

- Please be aware that after surgery, taking aspirin products and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS) will put you at greater risk for developing stomach and staple line ulcers. If you are taking any of these, talk with your primary care physician to find an alternative medicine to take when needed. Low-dose (81mg) enteric-coated aspirin is acceptable if prescribed by your doctor.
- Please be aware that after weight loss surgery (gastric bypass, sleeve gastrectomy, and lap band), consumption of alcohol, cigarette smoking and/or use of "street" drugs, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, crack, etc. is dangerous to your health and puts you at an increased risk for staple line and gastric ulcerations and hemorrhages. Understand that pregnancy should be postponed until weight loss has stabilized (usually 24-36 months).

When accepted into the Surgical Weight Management Program at Salem Hospital, you agree to participate in the above plan of post-operative follow-up care and agree to follow through with all appointments. You have been informed of and understand the risks of the procedure (gastric bypass or gastric sleeve) as listed, dated and initialed on separate sheets in the intake questionnaire.

What to Expect After You Leave the Hospital

- You should be able to stand, walk, and move about steadily without dizziness or lightheadedness. You should be up and walking often during the day. You should not have undue amounts of pain. We recommend you alternate periods of rest and activity. You should not sit for long periods in one position.
- You should be able to breathe comfortably without shortness of breath.
- You should not be coughing up sputum or blood.
- You should be able to drink fluids without constant nausea. Remember you have a new small stomach. You may have occasional episodes of nausea and vomiting while you are adjusting to your new stomach. This should pass in a few days. If you are unable to drink fluids without vomiting, you should call the doctor. You can expect to vomit if you "gulp" your fluids, if you drink fluids high in sugar, or drink more than your new stomach pouch can comfortably hold.
- You should be able to pass urine without difficulty. You should not have burning pain or bleeding when you pass urine. If you notice your urine becoming very dark, this is an indication you are not drinking enough fluids.
- You may have occasional gas pains until your bowel function returns to normal. Walking may help you pass this gas easier; your first few bowel movements may be liquid. This should resolve when your diet is more established. You will be taking vitamins with iron so you should expect your stools to be darker than usual. If you become constipated the first month, you should call the doctor before you take any laxative.
- You may feel "blue." Our experience has shown that after surgery many people experience temporary depression. Remember, this is common after this surgery and it will pass. Try to continue to get outside to walk and to visit friends. Signs of depression include:
 - Persistent sad, anxious, or empty mood
 - Loss of interest or pleasure in previously enjoyed activities
 - Restless, irritability or excessive crying
 - Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness
 - Sleeping too much or spending too much time in bed
 - Decreased energy
 - Difficulty concentrating, remembering or making decisions

Please remember that we are all here to help you. We are available to answer any questions that you may have. You can easily reach us by calling 978-825-6505. The administrator will answer your question or will direct you to the member of the team who can best answer your question.

Program Expectations

- A. I will be respectful of others and myself throughout this process.
- B. I will maintain an exercise routine that includes aerobic activity.
- C. I will maintain a structured meal plan that includes a variety of healthful choices with 3 meals and 2-3 snacks.
- D. I will wean off caffeinated beverages, soda, sport drinks, alcohol and fruit juice.
- E. I will lose weight in a safe, steady manner with the goal of losing weight gradually. (eg. 0.5 lb to 1.0 lbs /week).
- F. I will not miss any appointments. A missed appointment includes arriving late, late canceling (canceling less than 48hrs before an appointment) or no showing.
- G. For patients who are participating in therapy: I understand my compliance with psychotherapy is mandatory. Being compliant means keeping an open line of communication with my therapist, maintaining appointments and following through on the recommendations of my therapist. I understand it is expected that I will continue therapy up until and after surgery in order to help ensure my success after surgery.
- H. For patients requiring CPAP: I will demonstrate compliance with CPAP (70% usage = to a minimum of 4 hrs/night) and follow-up with my pulmonologist.
- I. For patients with Diabetes Mellitus: I understand the HG A1C must be < 8.0 at the time of surgery and I must be compliant with certified diabetes educators (CDE) if I am referred for appointments.

Surgical Clearance

I understand that I must be cleared for surgery by the team, I may require additional visits with the nurse, dietitian or psychologist before I am cleared for surgery. I will continue all lifestyle changes after completion of this program, up until and after surgery.