

# ON TRACK WITH BARIX

Support to Keep You On Track With a Healthful Lifestyle

## Emotional Challenges



Common challenges of bariatric surgery patients

Very simply put, bariatric surgery makes physical changes to the body that encourage significant weight loss. Bariatric surgery is a tool and it can be a very effective tool if used correctly. It is important for those considering or those having had surgery to realize that to be successful they will need to do all of the things that anyone does to reach and maintain a normal weight—with one big difference—their odds of success have just greatly increased. There will be sacrifices—going for a walk rather than plopping on the couch for a TV show, pushing away the bread basket at a restaurant, making a sugar free dessert to enjoy rather than eating a piece of cake, eating six small and nourishing meals, pushing away from the table when enough food is eaten, getting adequate protein, and learning to take small bites and chew foods well. Accepting that there will be some sacrifices helps to establish realistic expectations.

Expectations can impact a person's satisfaction with weight loss surgery and impact the emotional challenges that will occur. These include expectations of the surgery itself and the recovery period, changes required in lifestyle habits, new eating patterns, and what life will be like as a normal weight person in addition to many other expectations. Those that seek surgery mainly to improve their health and avoid the consequences of weight related conditions, and have realistic

expectations for the impact of a healthy weight on other aspects of their life, may experience fewer emotional challenges. A person that is counting on weight loss surgery to find true happiness in life, fix a broken marriage, or find the perfect mate, may be disappointed that losing weight does not have the impact on these areas that they had hoped for. Most people are somewhere in between these two extremes with their expectations. They realize the health benefits, but hope for some improvements to life situations. Talking to people that have had the surgery and asking some honest questions can help people to shift expectations that may be unrealistic closer to reality. The Barix Forums (<http://www.websitetoolbox.com/tool/mb/barixclinicsstore>) provide a means for that type of open and honest exchange of experiences which many people find helpful.

The part that the surgeons do not operate on and often the more difficult aspect of bariatric surgery are the emotional challenges that take place as people adjust to new eating habits, and the changes that occur as they lose a large amount of weight. These challenges can certainly influence the motivation to make wise food choices, exercise effectively, and make other healthful lifestyle changes. But they can go deeper than that; bariatric

surgery provides a physical solution but does not touch the underlying

psychological issues that may

have had a large or a small impact on the state of being overweight in the first place. For most, finding new, healthy coping mechanisms for everyday stress or stressful events, new pleasures, new ways to celebrate, and new ways to soothe are essential to weight loss success. Some may grieve the relationship they had with food. Others may experience discomfort as they receive different levels of attention from the opposite gender. Each person will experience these emotional challenges differently.

Below you will find some of the more common emotional challenges experienced by bariatric surgery patients.

### COMMON EMOTIONAL CHALLENGES

- Relationships with family and friends
- Changes in the marriage relationship
- Change of any kind (even good changes) can be difficult to adjust to
- Cravings for alcohol, drugs, shopping, gambling, sex or smoking may replace cravings for food
- Food takes on a different role—one of mainly physical nourishment

- New career opportunities or increased frustration with dead end jobs
- Although thinner, excess skin may impact satisfaction with body
- The weight is gone, yet the fear of regaining it remains
- Social gatherings may be experienced differently when food intake is limited
- Time spent planning for meals, preparing meals and eating meals may be experienced differently
- The reality that regular exercise is essential, even if being an exerciser is a foreign concept or a disliked activity
- Getting thinner has not had the expected impact on life situations
- Discomfort with a different attention level from the opposite gender
- More self-confidence and outgoing personalities may emerge as a healthy weight is reached

Recognizing that emotional challenges are a part of the surgery and weight loss process, being aware of what those challenges may look like, knowing that you are not the only one feeling the way that you feel, and knowing that you can get help are the first steps. Overcoming emotional challenges may just take talking to someone that has walked in your shoes. It may take attending a support group with caring people. You may find that working with a therapist is right for you. You may want to explore *The Solution Program* that teaches skills in self-nurturing and limit setting to overcome the use of external solutions like overeating, overdrinking, and overspending. You can find information on *The Solution Program* at [www.thepathway.org](http://www.thepathway.org). The surgery is the first step, making the most of the your new life may take challenging some old beliefs, facing fears, learning new skills, embracing change, and the willingness to move forward with new opportunities.

## What Barix Patients Have To Say About Emotional Challenges

“I was married for 25 years and he left 4 months after my bariatric surgery. I was very shocked. I lost 167 lbs. At the time it is happening you don't think you will change BUT YOU DO...inside and out. I have three very close friends that I have known my whole life. They are overweight and after my surgery, they stayed away for a while. I also did not want to go around them because I was so happy that I had lost weight and I didn't want them to hate me. When I did get together with them, I would wear big clothes so that it was not so apparent I had lost the weight. I met new friends through the Barix support group and they became my "social" life. I could talk with them and they understood everything. So here I am, 5 years and 4 months later. My "old" and "new" friends are still a very big part of my life. My family still thinks something will happen to my "health" because I had the surgery. What they don't understand is that something "health related" would have happened had I not had the surgery.”

~Jo

“The biggest emotional change or challenge for me was letting go of food. Food was truly an addiction for me but I never fully realized this until right after surgery. Gone was MY ability to choose whatever I wanted to eat whenever I wanted it. Instead I could only have clear liquids, to full liquids to pureed foods etc. It was during the pureed food stage that I finally admitted out loud that food was my addiction. Once I did that it was like lifting a weight off my shoulders. It's not to say that I am never challenged by food but I can make good choices because I know that food will never control my life again—I will not let it. If it is to be...it is up to me!”

~Nancy

The biggest emotional change for me...

“I have enjoyed the people around me telling me you are looking skinny—even though inside I still see myself as BIG—even though my pant size has gone down 6–7 sizes. It's hard to overcome looking in the mirror and seeing yourself as you really are (thinner). I fear every day I will gain the weight back as I have seen a few do. Eating can be an emotional thing even though you eat less you can still eat all the time and not lose; we must exchange it for something else. At first, I questioned why did I do this to myself...I LOVE food? But today 100+ pounds lighter, I feel I did do the right thing and can overcome the fears that still are inside me with the help of Barix and my friends.”

~Ann

### IT WORKED FOR ME

With school/fall schedules starting life seems to get so busy that it is easy to just either go thru the drive thru or grab something simple with not a lot of nutrition to it. I like to pull out my crock-pot. Not only is it easy to just dump items in and turn it on, but I can insure that my family will eat a hot, nutritious meal and if people eat at different times the crock is great as it allows everyone's food to be hot and not reheated and rubbery!

~Submitted by Nancy B.

## Healthful Tidbits

We talk a lot about exercising bodies at Barix, but how about exercising your brain as a part of a healthful lifestyle? The brain communicates through neural networks—extending branches of intricate nerve fibers called dendrites. These neural networks are reorganized and reinforced in response to new stimuli and learning experiences. It is amazing how the human brain is able to continually adapt and actually rewire itself. Mental stimulation improves brain function and protects against memory loss and cognitive decline.

Here are some simple ideas to stimulate your brain and keep mentally fit.

- Use the opposite hand to brush your teeth, control the computer mouse or dial the phone
- Read, read and read some more
- Play games like Yahtzee and crossword puzzles
- Add, subtract and multiply in your head instead of grabbing the calculator
- Write poems, lyrics, or a story—it doesn't matter what—just get your creative juices flowing
- Learn a new sport or physical activity—the brain and muscles are connected in an intricate way

*Bottom line—this saying applies to your brain just like your muscles—“Use it or lose it!”*



## What's New?

Quaker Q-Smart Bars are now available from our online store. These bars are a tasty way to increase your protein intake without too much added sugar or calories. Both the Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip and the Cranberry Almond varieties provide 10 grams of protein in a “just right sized” bar. At just 80¢ a bar, they are a bargain. Try them today!

# Planning for Surgery ~ Lapband vs. Gastric Bypass



During your consultation, your surgeon may recommend one surgery (gastric bypass or LapBand) over the other, based upon your individual circumstances. But, many people are candidates for either the laparoscopic gastric bypass or the LapBand surgery. There is an abundance of information (both good, solid information and misinformation) on both surgeries on the Internet. Deciding which surgery is best for you can be a difficult decision. Talk to other people before making your decision—those that have had a LapBand and those that have had a

gastric bypass. Both surgeries are effective tools in helping people reach and maintain a healthy weight if appropriate lifestyle changes are made and maintained. Conversely, both surgeries can fail if lifestyle recommendations are not followed. They should also both be thought of as permanent; a LapBand may be removed and a gastric bypass reversed, but weight gain will result. The table below summarizes the similarities and differences between these two options.

Roux-en-Y Gastric Bypass	LapBand
Gold standard, more long-term information available	Newer technology, promising results
More complex operation	Less complex operation
Rapid weight loss during first year, many lose 65% of excess weight loss.	Typically, slower weight loss—may lose up to 55% or more of excess weight within the first year.
Life-long vitamin and mineral supplementation required to prevent deficiencies	Life-long vitamin and mineral supplementation recommended
Dumping syndrome (intolerance to added sugars)	No Dumping syndrome—avoiding simple sugars recommended
Requires more complex surgery to reverse. Should be considered permanent.	Requires less complex surgery to reverse. Should be considered permanent.
No “appliances” left in body.	Non-reactive “appliance” remains in body
No appliance adjustments required.	Requires appliance adjustment for best results
Hormonal changes often reduce hunger cues and typically satisfaction achieved with smaller amounts of food	Do not experience alterations in hunger—although typically satisfaction achieved with smaller amounts of food
Best results occur with regular exercise	Best results occur with regular exercise
Barix Clinics recommends: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Six small high protein meals</li> <li>• Meeting protein goal daily</li> <li>• Adequate fluid, most calorie free, consumed between meals</li> <li>• Avoiding foods that have more than 2 grams of added sugars</li> <li>• Limiting foods that are high in fat</li> <li>• Regular exercise program</li> </ul>	Barix Clinics recommends: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Six small high protein meals</li> <li>• Meeting protein goal daily</li> <li>• Adequate fluid, most calorie free, consumed between meals</li> <li>• Avoiding foods that have more than 2 grams of added sugars</li> <li>• Limiting foods that are high in fat</li> <li>• Regular exercise program</li> </ul>

# REWARD YOURSELF!



This month, you could earn a **\$25 GIFT CERTIFICATE** for your "It Worked for Me" tips or recipes! Just submit as many recipes and "It Worked for Me" tips as you like, the most original and creative will be awarded a \$25.00 gift certificate. Include your name and contact info with your entry—make sure your recipes follow Barix nutritional guidelines. Tips must be submitted by October 31, 2006. This month, thanks to Nancy B. and Kris R. for the tips and recipes. Please send comments, ideas, recipes, and "It Worked for Me" tips to Deb Hart, RD, LD at [dhart@foresthealth.com](mailto:dhart@foresthealth.com).

## OTHERS CARE PLEASE SHARE.

Please tell us about the lives that have changed because you shared your weight-loss story. Submit your story to <http://www.barixclinicsstore.com/id190.html>. What you have to say may be printed in this publication or on our website and can serve as inspiration to all.

**REQUEST A FREE BROCHURE FOR YOU OR A FRIEND at 800-282-0066, or [www.barixinfo.com](http://www.barixinfo.com)**



## QUESTIONS?

### ABOUT FINANCING YOUR SURGERY?

Call a **Barix Patient Service Representative** at 800-282-0066.



# Recipes



### BEEF BURGUNDY

*Submitted by Nancy B.*

- 3 pounds top round 0" fat trimmed
- 1 pkg. dry onion soup mix
- 1 can Campbell's Healthy Request® cream of mushroom soup
- 1 can Campbell's Healthy Request® cream of chicken soup
- 1 can Campbell's Healthy Request® cream of celery soup
- 1 cup inexpensive red wine
- 1 8oz. can mushroom pieces, drained (optional)
- pepper and garlic powder to taste

Put all ingredients into crock-pot and turn on low or medium setting and cook at least 6 hours. Makes 10 servings. Serving suggestions: serve over noodles or rice; top with fat free sour cream; serve with a salad.

**Nutrition information per serving:** 301 calories, 30 grams protein, 9 grams fat, 10 grams carbohydrate, 619 mg sodium.

### ITALIAN CHICKEN

*Submitted by Nancy B.*

- 16 oz boneless, skinless chicken breasts or chicken pieces with skin removed
- 1 packet Good Seasons® Italian dressing mix
- ¼ cup water

Put all ingredients into crock-pot and turn on low and cook for 6–8 hrs. Makes 4 servings. Serve with a salad and some fresh fruit.

**Nutrition information per serving:** 213 calories, 35 grams protein, 5 grams fat, 5 grams carbohydrate, 495 mg sodium.



### WOBBLY DESSERT

*Submitted by Kris R.*

- 1 cup Cool Whip Free®
- 1 large box (or 2 small) gelatin, sugar free
- 1 12-oz. can of diet soda (see flavor combos below)

Completely dissolve Jell-O® into 2 cups boiling water. Add soda. Refrigerate until "wiggly" (about 2 hours, but no longer). With a mixer, stir in Cool Whip until completely mixed. Return to fridge until very firm (overnight is best). Makes 8 servings.

**Nutrition information per serving:** 25 calories, 1 gram protein, 0 grams fat, 3 grams carbohydrate, 65 mg sodium.

**Great flavor combos:** peach gelatin with diet cream soda, orange gelatin and diet cream soda, lime gelatin with diet lemon lime, strawberry gelatin with cream soda

**Serving suggestions:** use as a pie filling, layer with slices of fruit for a yummy parfait, sprinkle with crushed graham crackers or pretzels.

## RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY

To receive a free reconstructive surgery guide, call 800-282-0066 or send us an email at [rc@barixclinics.com](mailto:rc@barixclinics.com) with your name and contact information.

Our reconstructive surgery program is currently performed at all our centers in Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Arizona. Call us today for more information!